

INSIDE

Your quality Australian weekly soccer paper for the new millennium

SOCCER

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STRIKERS' OFF-FIELD WAR ENDS PEACEFULLY

Johnny
B
Good

JOHN BUONAVOLIA
Four Goals
In Four Days

Details
inside

Brisbane Strikers' divisive ownership issue has been resolved with the club and its now former chairman and managing director Tony Petty settling out of court in their legal battle over the club.

The deal included a confidentiality clause barring the parties discussing the figure they settled for, but it is believed to be a six-figure sum. This would compensate Petty for the amount of money he claimed he put into the club.

Petty said he was going to go away and "play some golf with my mate Peter Senior. I just want a few days to think about things," he said at a Gold Coast barbecue on Sunday.

The Queensland Soccer Federation owns the rights to be in the NSL and the Strikers Football Club Pty Ltd is a management company playing in the NSL on behalf of the QSF.

The QSF previously had a trust management group to operate the team, after that five-year term finished a private company was formed to take over that responsibility.

Tony Petty had a majority shareholding in that company.

"It was the company that Tony was with and he is no longer with the company," said Ray Evans, vice president of the QSF and CEO of Strikers.

At a brief board meeting at Suncorp Stadium on Saturday night it was expected that Ross Melville was to be appointed as the new Strikers chairman.

Evans also said that the plan to move the club to the Gold Coast was now dead, and that the Suncorp Stadium arrangement with Strikers was "wonderful."

However he bemoaned the fact that the club is continuing to struggle to gain acceptance and media support in a city that has a Super 12 Rugby side, an AFL team and the NRL's Brisbane Broncos.

"Every Saturday night we seem to be facing the Queensland Reds or the Broncos, so it makes it difficult. Remember, that 1997 Grand Final was an event," he explained.

"A major reason why we have not been able to capitalize on that Grand Final win is that we don't have a major TV station supporting us. We are the fourth code here but look at our numbers and we are the biggest code."

"The only way we can improve our crowds is to keep building support at the grass-roots level ... we don't have the funds for massive advertising campaigns."

This legal battle has taken much of the focus away from the club's attempts to make the top six. It may also have contributed to an alarming drop-off in crowds at Suncorp Stadium (the recent game against Sydney United drawing a paltry 1,706, a far cry from the 1997 Grand Final when over 40,000 Queenslanders saw the two sides play.)

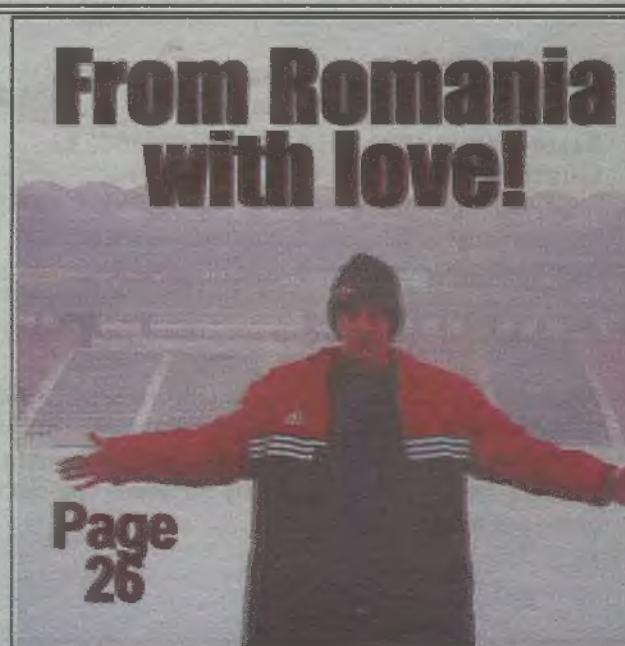
For Brisbane the off-field dramas began to take its toll around the time a number of their state league players (who had played the winter competition prior to the NSL) began to look tired. Deadly striker Paul Foster's injury also did not help.

Strikers' draw on Saturday night against Newcastle now makes the finals even more difficult for the Queensland flagship side.

This is a club that now needs to focus on bringing some success, both on and off the park, back to the club.



Curcija's back for South
We preview the crunch Force and Glory games at Bob Jane Stadium: Page five.



Page
26

Crooky



What a disappointing end to what was a great game between Northern Spirit and Marconi at Marconi Stadium on Sunday night.

A 95th minute from Sean Babic gave Marconi a 3-2 victory but it underlined again the beauty of the Northern Spirit v Marconi matches.

After a scoreless first half the second 45 minutes threw up five goals including an own goal, a penalty and an injury time winner. Talk about drama.

And it is not the first time these two clubs have put on a great match.

The last goal was a killer for us and really put a dampener on what was a very courageous performance to fight back from a goal down on two occasions to level the scores at 2-2 in the 82nd minute.

Unfortunately we couldn't repel the last raid from Marconi and we went down, but Graham Arnold and myself were extremely proud of the way the boys performed and fought back.

We were especially proud of the way the young boys in the side performed and I find it amazing that we are being criticised for not giving our youngsters a go when we consistently have four or five players on the field under the age of 21.

We started the match with Simon Catanzaro, who is only 18, as well as Matthew Langdon, who despite his good season is still just 19 years of age and Michael Cunico, who turned 21 last

week.

Ryan Griffiths was also introduced into the game and he is only 18, while his 19-year-old brother Adam was also on the bench.

These guys have been given regular first team football and they are progressing very well but you can't just throw a whole heap of them together and lead them to the slaughter.

We are all about protecting our younger players so their learning curve can be steep and not littered with knock-downs.

These guys are doing very well, as are Shane Lyons, Adam Snyder and Tony Faria, all of whom have played first grade this season.

On the positive side of things Matty Langdon scored his third goal of the season. Remarkably he has scored all three goals with his right boot, his least preferred foot.

This Friday we will continue our quest to move up the ladder when we take on the Melbourne Knights at North Sydney Oval.

They are coming off the back of a 4-0 loss to Wollongong, something we are familiar with after suffering 3-0 losses both at home and away against the Wolves this season.

The match, to be played at North Sydney Oval, kicks off at 7.30pm.

Ian Crook
Northern Spirit and England

INSIDE SOCCER

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S-news

Inside Soccer's
Australian news
and gossip

WAS THAT PAULINE HANSON

At the Marconi v Spirit game on the weekend? S-news actually thought it was Pauline Pantosdown, but maybe we were wrong. Our political sources tell us that One Nation was recently interested in sponsoring a club with a large junior base. Please, say it isn't so.

THE YOUNG SOCCEROOS

Assembled in Sydney yesterday. The training squad incredibly has not been announced, but from the various club releases we can tell you that Ben Sullivan of Wolves, Matt Thompson, Ahmed Elrich and keeper Liam Reddy from Power, and Ergic and Milicevic of Glory will be there. Joeys captain Mark Bynes would have been there but right now he is in sunny Germany with Bayern Munich.

WHO IS THE MOST FAMOUS AUSSIE IN THE WORLD?

This was the question posed by Channel Ten's 'The Panel' last week. Santo Cilauro came up with the notion that if the global game, football that is, is the biggest sport in the world, and Manchester United is the biggest football club in the world, then the most famous Aussie in the world would be Mark Bosnich. His theory, he said, was fleshed out in discussion with "his mate Patrick", which was in fact Patrick Mangan, the former Age Soccer writer and occasional Inside Soccer contributor. Agree? Disagree?

QUICK QUIZ

Who is the only South Melbourne player to have played in a World Cup?, asks Sitter fanzine's Grant Stantial. Answer at bottom of page.

SHARKS PLANNING

News from the Southern Sharks camp is that they had a letter from Soccer Australia informing them that they will not require a submission until 30 April. The club is now busily preparing things and they say it is going "OK".

GOOD TO SEE

Former Olympic, Apia and Adelaide Sharks striker Derek Poimer at the Power v South game. He told S-news he is getting back to fitness after a shocking run of injuries. Sadly, the player is still owed money by the Sharks. Another former Olympic player, Karon Taliadoros, was also at the game. Taliadoros, was once one third of the 'Three Ts' strikeforce at Olympic (Tome, Trajanovski, Taliadoros, ah those were the days). After Power coach Dave Mitchell said publicly he wanted to add to his forward line, wonder if Power is looking at these players to bolster their strikeforce? Sydney U has done just that with Fernando Pellegrino joining the ranks at Edensor Park from Fairfield Bulls.

SOCCEROOS GET CLOSE AND PERSONAL WITH MATILDAS

It's nice to see our Socceroos taking an interest in our national women's team. Five (unnamed) Socceroos have requested 'Roo management here in Australia to send them each a copy of said calendar. Well, it's art, isn't it? By the Matildas will play in the eight nation Pacific Cup in June. Look out for that.

LEO CARLE IN CHILE

Things are going well for the highly skilled Leo Carle, formerly of Sydney Olympic. Although he is with first division club Palestino, he has had other Chilean offers and may be considering his options, says 'our man in Santiago'.

BOB CATLIN MERCHANDISE

If you would like a great piece of merchandise, look no further than Newcastle's 'Jersey Joint' at Breakers Stadium, where they sell a heap of great

Newcastle gear, including our favourite, the Bob Catlin 'Rookwood Cemetery' T-shirt. The design is a caricature of Big Bob and it refers to his quote that Lee Sterrey resurrected his career that was at Rookwood Cemetery when he left Marconi. Bob, you're a card!

JUDGE CREWSYI

Tomorrow (Wed April 5) Parramatta Power's Andrew Crews will be judging a talent quest (I) at Lurnea HS (1.45 to 3pm) and on the same day the mighty Peter Bennett and other players will be at the Springwood Soccer & Sports Club Coaching Clinic at 5pm to 7.30. Today (Tuesday) Danny Townsend and Barney Smith will be at the Bidwell PS Coaching Clinic at 2pm and later that night David Mitchell will attend the Macarthur Rams Sportsman's Dinner. And next Tuesday is the club's Auction night, with entertainment. It's invite only but additional tickets may be purchased through the office.

VSF SURVEY

The Victorian Soccer Federation has created a survey to determine how well it is interacting with the media, where it could be doing a better job, and where things could possibly change so as to provide a better service. It's a good idea. Could Socoz do this too?

MASI ON INTERNATIONAL DUTY

Wollongong Wolves' Fijian striker Esala Masi will be missing from his club side as he has been called up by Fiji for the Melanesian Cup between 8-15 April. Masi is a cult figure back home. And Wolves is hopeful that they can beat Sydney City's record of 68 goals for a season. They have banged in 60 goals this season. Looks like the record will fall. And club head honcho Graeme Haney dismissed as "paper talk" reports that Matt Bingley would join the club on loan from Northern Spirit. "It's news to me," he added.

TOURS?

Leaf Field Solutions, the promoters of the 1999 All-Stars games, is believed to be negotiating for Greece to play here at the end of the season, while IEC, the company that has just joined the scene, is apparently gunning for Argentina. Dominic Galati, one of the company's men has been in Argentina recently. Shortly after these games the Oceania Confed Cup qualifiers will be played.

STERREYISM?

Perhaps it's time for our universities to have a good gander at the curriculum instead of how much money they can make? Students at the University of Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent are to be given the chance to study...David Beckham! He will be the subject of a new degree course, and hundreds are scrambling for places. The degree-related course is already oversubscribed. Students will spend 12 weeks writing papers and holding discussion sessions on the Old Trafford idol and will examine the cultural importance of his life and loves. In Australia, the philosophy and teachings of Lee Sterrey could be offered by Newcastle Uni? Nick Theodorakopoulos: his methods (the early years) at Wollongong Uni? Murdoch Uni's Bernd Stange and his relation to the Frankfurt School of Psychoanalytical theory? Uni of Western Sydney's Kmcevicism in a post-modern world? Advanced Matic at Uni of South Australia? The list goes on!

Answer: Steve Woodin: 1982 World Cup in Spain.

Late call-ups infuriate Strange

By Brett Klucznik

With Perth Glory coach Bernd Strange still seething over possibility of losing midfielder Kasey Wehrman for at least part of the NSL finals, Soccer Australia has further upset the apple-cart by requesting that another two of the side's stars - Ivan Ergic and Ljubo Milicevic - turn up for International duties.

Both scholarship holders at the AIS in Canberra last year, Ergic and Milicevic have been ear-marked for inclusion in the Australian side playing the qualifying stage of the world under-20 championship in January in the Cook Islands.

With team officials in the preliminary stages of selecting the squad for the

games, the Glory pair have been asked to attend a five-day camp at Parklea in Sydney, that began yesterday.

And while the camp will not keep Ergic and Milicevic from NSL action, Strange is unhappy that the Glory was given less than two weeks notice about the camp.

"I know the international team coaches have their job to do but they must announce it earlier," he said.

Strange is all for players attending national team duty, but said that it made his job difficult when requests were made at late notice.

"I have only one problem - I must know that one or two months earlier and then I can make my monthly schedule."

"And I can't do that, every week another call, every week another problem ... that is not the way to international class."

Midfielder Ergic is understandably happy to be back in the international arena after being part of the youth set-up early last year, but said there is also a degree of disappointment at the timing of the camp.

"It's always a great honour to play for Australia, but for me it comes at a bad time because I'm trying to break back into team," said Ergic who has been struggling for form since a groin injury in January.

"I haven't got back to the level I was before," he added.

Added to this, Perth Glory has publicly questioned Soccer Australia as to why they have scheduled an international tournament featuring the Olyroos at a time

when the NSL goes into finals mode.

The national body is planning to stage a four-nation under-23's tournament in late May/early June.

And while no dates or no opponents have been confirmed, the timing of the series co-incides with the NSL play-offs which start on the weekend of May 12-14 and run through until the Grand Final on either June 10 or 11.

Glory general manager Roger Lefort was critical of the timing as his club look likely to lose influential midfielder Kasey Wehrman to the tournament.

Wehrman, one of the club's highest-paid players, was signed in pre-season as a draw-card but has taken part in only four of Glory's past 14 games.

While suspensions account for three of these, he was absent for the remaining seven due to international commitments with the Olyroos and Socceroos.

"Hopefully we will be heavily involved in the last few weeks of the play-offs and it would be a blow were we to lose a player of Kasey's qualities," Lefort said.

"We realised when we signed Kasey that he would be required to take part in a lot of Olyroos games - and we fully support the Olympics - but we can't understand why the country's top players may not be available to take part in the country's major play-offs.

"Can you imagine an international tournament in England being planned during the FA Cup final and the top players



Two of Australia's most talented teenagers, Perth Glory's Ivan Ergic (top) and Ljubo Milicevic (left). Both are in the Young Socceroos camp.

not taking part in that showpiece decider? It's the same thing."

Lefort has written to Soccer Australia asking that clubs involved in the finals be excused from releasing players during the play-off period.

In addition to Glory, other clubs that may be affected by the friendly tournament are Sydney Olympic (with Brett Emerton), Marconi (Buddy Farah), Carlton (Simon Colosimo), Parramatta Power (Mile Sterjovski, Steve Laybutt and Jacob Burns) and South Melbourne (Con Blatsis and Michael Curjica).



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Con Boutsianis: made his debut in the reserves last week for Bolton against Everton.

By Brett Klucznik

A complete fabrication is how Bolton Wanderers manager Sam Allardyce describes the charges of armed robbery and false imprisonment which hang over his new signing, ex-Perth Glory midfielder Con Boutsianis.

Allardyce says the court appearance is not an issue and will not hamper Boutsianis' chances with Bolton.

The club has been in contact with the player's solicitor and is of the belief the midfielder is the victim of a set up.

"We have had a letter from Con's advisers and lawyers in Australia who say it is a complete

Boutsianis' Bolton debut

fabrication. We can only draw on what the solicitors have told us and the fact that it wasn't even an armed robbery.

"It was a set up by the Chinese restaurant owners who actually robbed themselves according to the evidence that I have read.

"So it looks like it is a complete fabrication. According to the attorney it will not be taken a step further so I don't think we have any fears or worries to think about."

However, everything is not that clear cut and Allardyce added that should the case proceed and Boutsianis does have to return to Australia on the eve of the promotional play-offs, it would naturally cast severe doubt over any future he might have with the club.

Meanwhile Boutsianis made his debut in the reserves last week at the Reebok Stadium in a 1-1 draw with Everton.

The Bolton side had five players on show for the first time, including Cayman Islander Frederick Wilks, Carson Fagan and Kevin James.

According to the Bolton Evening News, Boutsianis 'found it difficult to get into the game', although the Aussie did play the full

90 minutes. The team for Bolton was: Glennon, O'Malley, Wilks, Aljofree, Nolan, Phillips (Snorrason), Fagan (Norris), James (Buchanan), Grant, Kaprielian, Boutsianis.

Bernd Stange is likely to sign a new contract with Perth Glory this week, having discussed the matter with club management recently.

"I want to stay and I think we should finalise as soon as possible" said Stange.

He once again denied that he had been offered a chance to join German club, Borussia Dortmund. "They are only rumours and I will stop them now. I told our chairman Nick Tana that it's time to sit down and sign. I will do it."

For reasons known only to himself, Tana appears to be stalling on offering Stange a contract beyond June.

When Tana originally announced that the club would seek to retain the coach's services for 2000/01 before the recent home clash with Canberra Cosmos, he made mention that a contract would be forthcoming within the month.

Five weeks have now passed and nothing has yet come across the table in Stange's direction.

Perth Glory for minor premiers

By Brett Klucznik

Perth Glory coach Bernd Stange acknowledges that while Glory has a tough run to the finals, he is of the firm belief that they have what it takes to be crowned Minor Premiers.

Stange and his squad are aiming to top last season's third-place finish and will focus on bringing the Grand Final to Perth.

"We have always said our aim was to finish in the top six, but we should now try to hold our position as leader and have a grand final here," he said.

With only six rounds remaining, Glory must face five sides competing for a place in the finals play-offs - South Melbourne, Newcastle Breakers, Marconi Stallions, Sydney Olympic and Wollongong Wolves.

The club's only other game is in the final round of the regular season when they take on Northern Spirit at Perth Oval. But the Glory coach is unfazed by the testing schedule facing his side.

"Every competition is like a marathon, with highs and lows, but we are in the best position. It will be very hard, everyone will want to kick us out and beat the team on top of the ladder. We have tough away games especially, but it's good training for the finals."

The side have in recent weeks had to field a somewhat depleted line-up with players of the calibre of Kasey Wehrman, Troy Halpin, Scott Miller, Bobby Despotovski and Gareth Naven all missing games for a variety of seasons.

"We are starting to get all our players back now. We will be strong and there will be good competition for places in the team. It's important for me that players who haven't been regulars like Carbone, Thorp, Afkos and Buljan are ready to fight. It gives us much more confidence for the next two months," added Stange.

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Since 1920

For South it's time to shine

This year, writes Aidan Ormond, the world saw how good South Melbourne could be. Its WCC performance exceeded almost everyone's expectations, despite an inconsistent lead-up to the tournament here in our NSL.

The trip has come and gone and South Melbourne was expected to make a late charge for the top six. Once that was achieved they would conquer all before them, just as they had the previous two seasons.

Alas, it has not been that simple. The champions have been as inconsistent since their return as they had been before the trip. Home defeats at the hands of the

Football Kingz and Marconi Stallions coupled with a shock away defeat at the hands of lowly Canberra Cosmos and, last week at Parramatta Power, has put them in a very precarious position.

They have to remain undefeated in their last seven games to have a realistic chance of attaining sixth position.

Beating Perth Glory this Sunday will be a very tall order, although the team from the west have been having up and down results in the last couple of weeks. The leaders were beaten in Melbourne by the Melbourne Knights but then recovered to record a handsome 3-1 win over the Kingz in Perth.

However their 2-0 home win over

bottom side Sydney Utd last weekend hardly inspired confidence.

Bernd Stange, the Glory coach, has been having his own problems particularly in midfield where his top four midfielders have seen little action over the past few weeks.

South Melbourne need its experienced players to fire if they are to make a Lazarus-like comeback. Paul Trimboli, Fausto De Amicis, Goran Lozanovski and David Clarkson (right) in particular have to be on song to make the other players lift.

One positive for the champions is the return of Michael Curcija, the equal top goal scorer in the League, and probably the only player who can be satisfied with his performance this season. He has been putting away the goals all year but he will need his team-mates to be creative around him.

The fate of a season hangs in the balance when South Melbourne hosts Adelaide Force in the deferred round 25 clash at Bob Jane Stadium this Wednesday night, writes Greg Blake.

What was easily the grandest NSL finals rivalry of the 1990's has been reduced to a mere pre-finals aperitif, but such are the stakes here that the South Melbourne ground will be throbbing for this one.

The fixture for the tail end of the season has re-ignited South Melbourne's hopes, despite that morale-sapping



defeat at Parramatta Power last Friday night.

The equation for South is pretty simple; win this one and stay just a game off the pace and then go for the jugular with two games each to come against both Carlton and Newcastle, two teams on the periphery of the elite group.

Because the Adelaide team also needs South Melbourne to help pick off the Breakers or Carlton in the run home Matic's team cannot afford to spot South Melbourne three points here.

Force must extend their current winning streak to six games, yet leave wishing Ange Postecoglou's men a sincere 'best wishes' for the rest of the year.

South Melbourne and Adelaide Force featured together in all but one finals series during the 1990's and won five of the ten grand finals contested. Wednesday night's clash will decide if the old guard has any place in the new millennium.

Mori still wary of South

Damian Mori, Force's highest all-time NSL goalscorer knows a thing or two about the finals. And the Socceroo is one who is not taking South's recent form too seriously.

"It's difficult to play anyone on their home ground isn't it?" he said of tomorrow night's crunch match at Bob Jane Stadium against fellow finals aspirant South Melbourne.

"And with South I mean look at the players in their squad, it's very strong so I think any side in the league would be frightened to go down to their ground," Mori said.

"As for the finals it's too hard to write anyone off at this point. South is close, we're close and really we've got everything to play for.

"This Wednesday is crucial for both sides. For us if we won it would place us two

points out of the six ... every game is a grand final for us. We have to win every game from now because we have lost enough times this season."

And one player who may yet become the Damian Mori of this decade, South's Olyroo Michael Curcija, is back for South. Mori is clearly wary of this going into the game.

"Michael Curcija's return is good for them, he's scoring goals so it's good for South and the player that he is back."

With both teams adamant that three points is the only thing they want from this game, expect Mori and Curcija - two of the league's great strikers - to have a big say in the outcome of this hugely important game.

Aidan Ormond

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MELBOURNE**
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7.30pm
WEDNESDAY APRIL 5



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GREG BLAKE
C7 SOCCER COMMENTATOR

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It was into November last year that most of us thought the dragon had finally been slain; that Adelaide Force's remarkable run of ten consecutive finals campaigns was finally at an end.

By mid-December we were ready to stuff the carcass; Zoran Matic's team having been cleaned up in consecutive home games by those upstart Kiwi Kingz and then a Wollongong team which had won only once away to the South Australians in 15 previous visits.

Yet such is the aura surrounding the Adelaide club that despite all the internal problems and on-field uncertainty, keen students of the NSL, such as Newcastle boss Lee Sterrey, weren't prepared to toe-tag the body.

When Adelaide was dead-last and had stumbled to one win from 11 starts I genuinely thought Sterrey was playing ducks and drakes when he stewed over how the NSL draw had pitted his team against Matic's four times this season.

"Nah, don't worry, they'll be back."



Branko Culina: his coaching style is naturally attacking, which is great for the fans at Belmore.

Sterrey insisted.

"Come round 14 - when we're due to play them - Zoran and his team will be right back up there.

"Zoran's teams always come good at the right time."

Bugger me if they haven't done just that, the Zebras staggering out the grave to string together five straight wins - the best winning streak of any club thus far this campaign - and within sniffing distance of the top six coming into the stretch.

Sterrey and all those who were sensibly guarded enough to not be too hasty in putting a line through Force's name nailed it - almost.

This year's now traditional late run by the South Australians won't be enough to get 'em over the line, even if they do scare the pants off the teams clinging to the bottom edge of the top six in the next couple of weeks.

Matic's team - a blend of the old guard and some impressive kids - is good and improving more rapidly than could reasonably have been expected in the climate of change and uncertainty at the club.

Even the mini-revival has been deceptive.

They slapped Sydney United around, but who doesn't?

Newcastle choked at their place in round 26; they beat the fast-fading Kingz in Auckland and Sydney Olympic had every opportunity to slaughter them on Friday night.

Quite simply, the numbers are stacked against them.

In a season that has been extraordinarily closely contested stringing wins together has been a struggle for even the front-runners.

Force have done well to get five on end, but the net result is that they are still two games shy of the top six; thus they must extend the streak to seven on end minimum and rely on the likes of Carlton, Marconi or Newcastle to drop two or three during the same



Zoran Matic: despite his side's revival he has publicly questioned the divisions within the club off the field which 'are tearing the club apart.'

period.

Even drawn games will cost them, and with road games at South Melbourne (Wednesday night) and Wollongong to come in the next five days the Force face the distinct possibility of going into the last four weeks of the regular season still a game or worse off the pace.

The time window will close on them.

Truth be told, the club which dominated finals footy in the 1990's could probably use a dose of humility. You know, reality calling.

The administration of Adelaide City Force is currently living away in la-la land; apparently labouring along in the mistaken belief that they are still pacesetters on and off the field.

The club is actually well and truly under the microscope and the club's perception that they still have a divine right to rule South Australian footy will cost 'em, sooner or later.

The collapse of the Sharks hasn't rung the alarm bells; at least one red-hot NSL bid from an independent South Australian consortium hasn't done the trick; dwindling crowds at the wonderfully refurbished Hindmarsh Stadium isn't telling the story; the Ned Coton debacle made no difference; even the likelihood of missing the finals for the first time in ten years doesn't seem to have kicked them in the arse.

I understand things might get worse still - but that's another story yet to break.

Maybe, just maybe, they might take some notice of club legend, three-time championship winning coach, Zoran Matic.

You might remember him as the poker-faced, guarded and possibly least quotable club boss in competition history.

Not any more.

He hit last Sunday's local South Aussie rag with what surely must be the club's definitive wake-up call.

Matic's message was fundamentally this: that there are three factions currently involved with Adelaide Force and the divisions are "tearing the club apart."

That Matic has publicly gone out on a limb in itself signifies the critical decisions facing the club.

His message might be the last warning the club gets - how they elect to respond might decide the future of the Force, or indeed whether they have a future at all.

the footballing cultures embraced by Matic and his Sydney Olympic counterpart, Branko Culina, was pretty obvious during and after Adelaide Force's pretty damned fortunate win over Olympic last Friday night.

Although Culina reflected on how his side had lapsed into some "stupid soccer" it must be said that Olympic's approach to the game was, once again, a joy.

Culina has never won an NSL championship. But attack the game with a cavalier approach and go for the scoreboard win regardless - it's top stuff.

And most un-Matic like.

For the best part of his time at Adelaide Matic has produced a succession of patient, scheming, perfectly drilled and ultimately predictable result-oriented teams.

Unapologetically, predictable - winning football.

Matic has won the big one three times from five grand finals.

Matic would never approach a road game of some significance in the manner that Olympic did on Friday night.

It's a cruel game that can demoralise a team so savagely as Olympic was in this one, going down to a hideously soft penalty and a subsequent sealer in garbage time as their desperate cavalry charge was punished by an Adelaide team which, well, has punished teams like that for a decade or more.

Nothing specific in the post game exchanges between the two coaches but few left the press conference without the impression that Matic was smugly content, his methods once again validated by the result.

Culina must rue what might have been on the night - what really should have been - and ultimately address possibly the most perplexing question of his NSL coaching career.

Does Culina gamble on compromising the stylish football which has drawn punters back to Belmore and given Olympic a glimpse of the promised land for a more pragmatic safety-first approach?

Or by sacrificing the sometimes foolishly flamboyant smash and grab game would he be eliminating the very weapon which has served to elevate Olympic above the realms of mediocrity in which the club has dwelled for too many years?

I reckon the ultimate fate of Sydney Olympic's season hinges on Culina's response.

grblake@primus.com.au

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Who is correct and why is purely subjective, but the obvious gulf between

Malaysia tour for the innovative VIS

By Roy Hay

Once again the Victorian Institute of Sport will give the next generation of elite junior soccer players vital experience in overseas touring and matches when Ernie Merrick takes the current squad to Malaysia for a four-match trip.

"The purpose of this Malaysian tour is to simulate a World Cup experience for the young players, as it is only a matter of time until some of this current squad progress to international representation," said respected youth coach Ernie Merrick.

Given that three VIS graduates, Scott McDonald, Joey Di Iorio and Joshua Kennedy were members of the Joeys who finished runners-up to Brazil in the World Youth Cup in New Zealand last year, the claim has substance.

At least four of the current Olyroos, Con Blatsis, Daniel Allsopp, Vince Grella and Simon Colosimo are former VIS players.

This year Merrick has selected a new intake of players primarily from last year's Victorian Under-14 Talent Identification Squad to complement the existing scholarship holders.

The squad leaves Melbourne at midnight on 8 April and has its first match against Kuala Lumpur Under-19s on Monday 10 April.

Next it is Selangor's Under-21 team on the Wednesday followed by the full Malaysian Under-19 National team on Friday 14 April.

The final game on Monday 17 is against the Malaysian Under-16 National team, followed by a return to Melbourne on 18 April.

This intense program pits the youngsters against a variety of levels of opposition under differing climatic and cultural conditions.

It requires the players to adapt to these new experiences and to monitor their own responses as part of the process of learning to be international players.

In support of the team, Merrick will have Aaron Healey, a brilliant young former graduate of the VIS, who has blossomed as a coach and looked after the Victorian Under-16 team which won last year's national championships.

Healey has succeeded South Melbourne midfielder David Clarkson, whose influence on recent VIS graduates has been immense.

Steve Whytcross is the physiotherapist and three sports scientists, Troy Flanagan, Meg Jones and Anita Pedrana will assist the youngsters to develop the self-management skills required and provide evidence of the physiological changes which take place when competing under conditions of high humidity.

The travelling party is completed by team manager Murray Baum.

A program of this type depends on the co-operation of numerous people and organisations.

Former Australian Institute of Sport Head Coach Ron Smith, now

coaching in Malaysia, has been a vital go-between.

The Malaysian authorities have been most receptive to tours which have given their own young players experience of competition against foreign talent, while Malaysian Airlines provides the transport and the VIS Soccer Sponsors, Snickers, Admiril and Real have helped underpin the enterprise.

The emphasis in the VIS program is the marriage of the most up-to-date sports science with the best of innovative soccer coaching.

These are used to develop players who can exercise independent judgment about their performances on and off the

field and take responsibility for their own future development.

It is a far cry from traditional training methods of fear and discipline.

The VIS program sets a standard for soccer in this country and increasingly overseas with a two-way flow of information now well established.

As other countries begin to adopt some of the same methods and techniques it should be evident that Australia cannot rest at the level it has reached, but must strive to develop these programs further so that the next generations can be as competitive at world level as those of the recent past.

1. Eugene Galekovic - GK -(18yrs) Reps - VSF State Team U/15, U/16 Nat Champs - (Bulleen)
2. David Petković - Def -(16yrs) Reps - VSF State Team U/15, U/16 Nat Champs - (Keilor)
3. Jason Dimozambos - Def -(18yrs) Australian Schoolboys Team 1999 - (Kingston)
4. Daniel Rocco - Def/Mid -(17yrs) Reps - VSF State Team U/15, U/16 Nat Champs - (Fawkner)
5. George Pantelidis - Def -(18yrs) - (Kingston)
6. Ibraim Ibraimi - Mid/Striker -(14yrs) Reps - VSF State Team U/15, U/16 Nat Champs - (South Dandenong)
7. David Terek - Striker/Mid -(18yrs) Reps - VSF State Team U/15, U/16 Nat Champs - (Springvale)
8. Denis Vucinic - Mid -(18yrs) - VIS Vice Captain - Victoria U/16 Representative - (Bulleen)
9. Ricky Chillico - Mid/Striker -(16yrs) Reps - VSF State Team U/15, U/16 Nat Champs - (Fawkner)
10. Simon Storey - Mid -(17yrs) - VIS Captain Reps - VSF State Team U/15, U/16 Nat Champs - (Springvale)
11. Evan Papadopolous - Striker/Wide Mid. -(16yrs) - VSF State Team U/15, U/16 Nat Champs - (Altona East)
12. Damien Ostrowski - Def -(15yrs) Reps - VSF State Team U/15, U/16 Nat Champs - (Box Hill)
13. Spase Dilevski - Def/Mid -(14yrs) Reps - VSF State Team U/14, U/15 Nat Champs - (Sydenham)
14. Manny Karas - Mid -(14yrs) Reps - VSF State Team U/14, U/15, Nat Champs - (Brunswick City)
15. Serkan Oksuz - Striker -(13yrs) - Melbourne Knights
16. Michael Sham-Yuen - Striker -(14yrs) Reps - VSF State Team U/14, U/15 Nat Champs - (Box Hill)
17. Sammy De Vito - Def -(14yrs) - VSF State Team U/14, U/15 Nat Champs - (Box Hill)
20. Adam Hrehorek - GK -(18yrs) Reps - VSF State Team U/15, U/16 Nat Champs - (Melbourne Knights)
21. Fred Au - GK -(15yrs) - VSF State Team U/15, U/16 Nat Champs - (Port Melbourne)

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Challenge & Volvo Shoot-out

AUSSIES on the world stage

A round-up of how our Aussies players fared abroad this last week ...

Foster plays full game for Palace

After a resounding loss against the Czech Republic in mid week most of the Aussie team were more successful with their clubs in games held over the weekend.

The most notable was the 7-1 win by Manchester United over West Ham in the English Premier League. Although he was a late withdrawal from the Aussie team Mark Bosnich was able to take his place in United's goal as they demolished the mid-table Londoners.

Bosnich didn't have a lot to do but he did strike some trouble early on when he missed a cross which was fortunately headed wide.

If he can retain his place in the star studded United line-up Bosnich looks headed for his first championship medal as United streak away from the chasing pack with a ten point cushion.

Another later withdrawal from the Czech game, Harry Kewell, didn't have the same sort of luck when his Leeds team hosted Chelsea.

Kewell went into the game seeking to equal the club goal scoring record of having scored seven games in a row. But this wasn't Kewell's nor Leeds' day as Chelsea beat them 0-1 to move to within five points of the second placed Leeds.

Kewell, like the rest of the team, was stifled and wasn't allowed to display his talent by an experienced Chelsea defence.

Richard Johnson played the full game as Watford's life in the Premier League draws to a conclusion as they suffered another defeat, this time at the hands of Everton 4-2.

In the Nationwide First Division, the local derby between Birmingham and Wolverhampton featured two Aussies with Stan Lazaridis playing 64 minutes for the home team, Birmingham, who triumphed 1-0, and Kevin Muscat who played the whole of the game for Wolverhampton.

Muscat was involved in an incident, but on this occasion he was the victim, as a Birmingham player lashed out at the Aussie after a tackle and was duly dismissed from the field.

Both teams are still in contention for play off spots with Birmingham in fifth spot but only five points behind second, and automatic pro-

motion, spot while Wolverhampton is seventh but five points behind sixth placed Huddersfield who are desperately holding onto the last play off position.

Shaun Murphy seems to have had as many problem with the Blackburn defence as he did with the giant Czech Jan Koller, as his Sheffield United team went down 5-0 with the Aussie defender playing a full game.

Crewe's Jason Kearton was in a similar position as visitors, Nottingham Forest, rammed three goals past him.

In Crystal Palace's 1-0 away loss to Fulham Craig Foster played the whole game but fellow Aussie Nick Rizzo was out injured.

Danny Tiatto continued his stint in the Manchester City starting line-up as they beat bottom placed Swindon 0-2 to maintain their challenge for a top two spot - they are currently in third spot, two points behind second placed Barnsley. Tiatto played a full game and received a yellow card while Frank Taia was in the home team's goal for the entire game.

In the Friday game, the runaway leaders Charlton had a 2-1 home win over Queens Park Rangers for whom George Kulacar remained on the bench.

In the Nationwide Division Three, Steve Mautone, who was the reserve keeper for Czech game, was in the same spot for Chesterfield.

Lucas Neill was absent due to injury from Millwall's away 1-1 draw with Notts County while Tim Cahill, whose Australian eligibility is still unresolved, played the full game as the away team hangs onto the race for promotion in fourth spot.

In the Scottish Premier League, Rangers had a 1-1 away draw with bottom team Aberdeen but played without both of their injured Aussies, Craig Moore and Tony Vidmar.

In Celtic's game against Kilmarnock Mark Viduka succumbed to his hamstring injury and did not take part in a 4-2 win for Celtic.

In Germany, Ned Zelic played the full game while Paul Agostino came on in the 75th minute as 1860 Munchen lost 1-2 away to leaders Bayer Leverkusen for whom Frank Juric was still injured.

In the Serie A Paul Okon was missing from the Fiorentina squad as they drew 2-2 with Bologna while in Serie B Vince Grella played a full game for Ternana who had a 1-0 home win over Treviso while Marco Bresciano was part of Empoli's squad that drew 1-1 away to Ravenna.

In Holland, Zeljko Kalac was absent for the second week in succession as Roda JC had a surprising 3-0 win over Ajax for whom Jason Culina and Joe Didulica are bidding their time in the reserves.

In Croatia, Ante Milicic was not included in the squad as Rijeka won 2-0 at home over Sibenik.

The Olyroos were downed 2-1 by Holland last week, in the second and final match of their European tour, in Sittard.

Captain Brett Emerton leveled the scores at 1-1 in the 40th minute after the Australians conceded a goal in the 30th, but a second goal to the Dutch in the 67th provided the Dutch with the win in a very fast game in which the Aussies had a number of goal scoring opportunities.

Coach Raul Blanco was happy with the performance of his team and saw it as a vital part of its preparation for the Sydney 2000.

"I was very pleased with the boys' on-field performance today, we played one of the best teams we have played until now, Holland is a top European soccer nation and it was an exceptionally good match.

"Obviously we are disappointed with the final result, but I think the positives that have come out of this match, and in fact the camp, far outweigh the negatives, and it's important to take the positives from playing two excellent opponents away with us.

"Our next challenge will be the Four Nation tournament which will be held in Australia in late May/early June.

"These two games have given us a clear indication that we are moving in the right direction and that the development of the team is getting closer and closer to where we have to be."

HOLLAND 2: (Bouma 30', Sikora 67')

AUSTRALIA 1: (Emerton 40')

Olyroos: Joe Didulica, Lucas Neill, Con Blatsis, Buddy Farah, Chris Coyne, Jacob Burns, Vince Grella, Kasey Wehrman (Marco Bresciano 60'), Jason Culina, Brett Emerton, Kosta Salapasis (Michael Curcija 70').

Australia went down 3-1 to the world number two ranked Czech Republic, in last week's friendly in Teplice.

After sustained pressure in the opening moments of the first half by the home side, the Socceroos conceded the first goal of the match in the 10th minute, failing to clear a corner, with the goal headed in by Milan Fukal.

Striker Mark Viduka had the Socceroos' best chance to even the scores in the first half, beating several defenders in a solo run in the 30th minute, before his shot was stopped by the goalkeeper.

Midfielder Josip Skoko almost leveled the scores just 6 minutes into the second half, his shot from outside of the box parried over the bar by the Czech keeper, but the Australians fell further behind just a couple of minutes later, Jan Koller scoring his 12th goal from 12 games after a successful counter attack.

The Czech Republic's third goal was scored in the 86th minute, after another counter-attack, which was finished off by Ivo Ulrich, while Australia's consolation goal came in the dying minutes of the game, Craig Foster posting his name on the scoreboard, after the Czech defence failed to clear a corner.

Frank Farina was pleased overall with the performance of the team and commented after the game:

"We got off to a bit of a bad start, where in the initial 10 to 15 minutes, we gave away some silly free kicks, gave away possession in bad areas, and got punished for it by having the goal scored against us just 10 minutes in."

"After that, the boys settled and played really well for the last 20 minutes or so of the first half, we had our chances, and we went into the second half on a positive note."

"Their second goal came from the chances we were creating at the other end, it came on the break, and showed a bit of naivete on our behalf, with too many players forward, which caught us on the quick break."

"That was also the story of the third goal, a chance to Mark Viduka saw them catch us on the break again, we should have sat someone back, and we didn't."

"Overall, I thought the boys played quite well, but the bottom line is that they caught us out twice - we got caught on a couple of occasions and we paid for it - but we'll also learn from it."

CZECH REPUBLIC 3: (Milan Fukal 10', Jan Koller 53', Ivo Ulrich 66')

AUSTRALIA 1: (Craig Foster 88')

Socceroos: Zeljko Kalac, Kevin Muscat (Luke Casserly 69'), Shaun Murphy, Tony Popovic, Jason van Bleek (Richard Johnson 78'), Stan Lazaridis, Paul Okon (c), Josip Skoko, Steve Corica (Craig Foster 55'), Mark Viduka, Paul Agostino (Clayton Zane 69').

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Ex-Glory boys shine

By Scott O'Donnell in Singapore

Aussies Tony Carbone and Michael Garcia led Marine Castle to their first win of the season over the previously undefeated Gombak United.

In what was a thoroughly deserving victory, Carbone and Garcia dominated the midfield and created some great chances for their young, inexperienced strikers.

Although down 1-0 at the break, Marine Castle easily could have been in front by three or four goals. In the end Marine Castle's two young strikers Ashrin and Firdaus both got on the scoresheet to give their team their first three points.

Alan Vesi's Geylang United once again had a relatively comfortable 3-1 victory over Sembawang Rangers. Brian Bothwell scored his third goal of the season and proved a handful for the Sembawang defence, led by Australian Mirko Jurilj.

Although Geylang dominated the game, it wasn't until the final thirty minutes that they scored their first goal. Former Perth Glory defender, Gavin Wilkinson, had a strong game in midfield and was unlucky not to score with a header in the first half.

Darren Stewart's Balestier Central are still without any points after their 3-1 loss to Home United, who were once again without the injured Emile Tapai.

Balestier took the game to Home United, playing Stewart as a striker. The first half ended scoreless with neither team creating any real chances.

The second half was a different story, with a defensive blunder allowing Home United's Danish import Rene Anderson to score his first goal of the season.

Things went from bad to worse for Balestier, having Jumaat sent off and then conceding a penalty, which was converted by Anderson.

Balestier pulled one goal back from a free-kick by new import, Jason Ainsley and had a great chance to equalize but Dau Matthew put his shot wide of an open goal.

Brazilian striker Egmar killed off the game with a well taken goal in injury time.

In other Round Four results, Tampines Rovers went down 3-1 to Woodlands, the undefeated SAFFC scored an emphatic 4-1 win over Clementi, and Jurong held Tanjong Pagar to a scoreless draw.

Card Update

PLAYERS:	Y	R	Tot
1 Harry James	8	1	9
2 Vince Savoca	8	1	9
3 Jamie Harnwell	8	0	8
4 Che Bance	7	2	9
5 Troy Halpin	6	2	8
6 Jacob Burns	7	1	8
7 Goran Lozanovski	7	1	8
8 Nick Meredith	7	1	8
9 Danny Burt	8	0	8
10 Gabriel Mendez	8	0	8
11 Andy Vargas	8	0	8
12 Dean Fak	8	0	8
13 Walter Ardene	5	2	7
14 Manny Gotis	6	1	7
15 Robert Liparoti	6	1	7
16 Dino Mennillo	6	1	7
17 Mark Silic	6	1	7
18 Jason Vukadin	6	1	7
19 Chris Jackson	7	0	7
20 Darren McDonald	7	0	7
21 Stuart McLaren	7	0	7
22 Claudio Pelosi	7	0	7

CLUBS:	66	6	72
1 StnM	66	6	72
2 Canb	62	6	68
3 Marc	62	6	68
4 SOly	61	4	65
5 Kngz	57	7	64
6 PPwr	58	6	64
7 Kngz	57	7	64
8 MKni	51	7	58
9 WWol	53	4	57
10 Gpsl	51	3	54
11 PGry	48	6	54
12 BStr	49	2	51
13 AdIC	48	3	51
14 NSpr	40	4	44
15 Carl	34	4	38
16 Newc	35	2	37
TOTAL	831	75	906

	Home	Away	Total
Yellows	371	460	831
Reds	26	49	75
Total	397	509	906

REFEREES:	G	Y	R	Aver
1 Matthew Brown	28	113	14	4.8
2 Simon McAlister	24	91	5	4.0
3 Con Diomis	23	103	8	4.8
4 Gerry Connolly	24	55	7	2.6
5 Brett Hugo	23	95	10	4.8
6 Eddie Lennie	22	101	4	4.8
7 Mark Shield	22	97	9	4.8
8 Jeremy Blaney	14	30	3	2.4
9 David Dwight	12	43	3	3.8
10 Derek Rugg	7	23	6	4.1
11 Perry Mur	9	14	1	1.7
12 Wayne Dade	6	33	2	5.8
13 Brian Precious	6	29	3	5.5
14 Craig Zetter	1	4	0	4.0

Local clubs pledge support to Cosmos

Soccer Canberra's member clubs have thrown their support behind NSL side Canberra Cosmos. The presidents of the local clubs agreed to a significant contribution to the Cosmos which will see approximately \$100,000 going to the Cosmos this year, the first year of the arrangement.

The support of the clubs sees them assume status equivalent to that of a major sponsor.

In return for the support, Canberra Cosmos have agreed that each Soccer Canberra junior registered player will receive a free season pass from next season.

Soccer Canberra president Steve Doszpot said, "The clubs are acutely aware of how important the Cosmos is to soccer in Canberra, the NSL team is our flagship increased the profile of the game in Canberra as well as being a stage for many of our best young players to show their wares".

Soccer Canberra junior league chairman Damien Beck said: "For many young players, and there are over 8,000 of them locally, the Cosmos players are stars... they flock to them at registration days, presentation days or in the schools. We must support them and this is what our clubs have done."

That great Aussie tradition

Sitting on The Hill, no matter what sport, is that great Aussie tradition. Sydney Olympic's marketing manager Clinton Marks has successfully initiated this at Belmore Oval.

The Hill side of the ground has been a success this season because, as Marks says, "we've tried to offer families an enjoyable atmosphere to watch the game."

That atmosphere includes music and also a special price deal exclusive to the Hill. Adults are only five dollars on the 'Olympic Family Hill' and kids under 16 are free.

Marks explained further, "I've been involved with Rugby League and the biggest criticism was the cost for families to see games. At Olympic families have really taken to the Hill, they bring their picnic baskets and relax in the sun and enjoy a game while our traditional fans like the main stand. Everyone's happy."

Olympic plays Cosmos this weekend. For families it's a value for money day out with one of the NSL's most entertaining sides.

Aidan Ormond

NSL TOP SCORERS:

MICHAEL CURCIJA 16
(South Melbourne)

PABLO CARDOZO 16
(Sydney Olympic)

JOHN BUONAVOGLIA (NB) 15

DAMIAN MORI (ACF) 14

CON BOUTSIANIS (PG) 13

ALEX MOREIRA (C) 12

STUART YOUNG (WC) 12

CROWD COMPARISON:

Cumulative to Round 28

99/00: 1,137,072

98/99: 1,101,398

NSL match reports and analysis follows on the next eight pages. The mid-week game is on page 26 and quotes of the week is on 15.

	(OVERALL)					(HOME)					(AWAY)							
	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS	GD	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A
PERTH GLORY	28	15	7	6	52	36	52	16	10	3	1	33	16	5	4	5	19	20
Wollongong Wolves	28	14	8	6	60	38	50	22	9	1	4	30	19	5	7	2	30	19
Marconi Stallions	28	14	6	8	42	35	48	7	8	2	4	21	17	6	4	4	21	18
Sydney Olympic	28	14	5	9	48	33	47	15	7	4	2	30	14	7	1	7	18	19
Newcastle Breakers	28	13	8	7	41	35	47	6	8	4	2	27	18	5	4	5	14	17
Carlton	28	13	6	9	44	32	45	12	7	4	3	22	13	6	2	6	22	19
Adelaide Force	27	11	7	9	39	28	40	11	8	3	3	28	14	3	4	6	11	14
Parramatta Power	27	11	5	11	43	37	38	6	7	4	3	24	15	4	1	8	19	22
Brisbane Strikers	28	10	8	10	36	33	38	3	6	5	3	25	15	4	3	7	11	18
Football Kingz	27	11	5	11	45	48	38	-3	6	3	4	23	21	5	2	7	22	27
South Melbourne	27	10	6	11	40	41	36	-1	7	3	3	23	12	3	3	8	17	29
Melbourne Knights	28	10	6	12	30	47	36	-17	6	2	6	14	18	4	4	6	16	29
Northern Spirit	28	10	3	15	35	48	33	-13	7	2	5	18	19	3	1	10	17	29
Gippsland Falcons	28	6	8	14	17	35	26	-18	3	4	7	10	16	3	4	7	7	19
Canberra Cosmos	28	6	7	15	36	54	25	-18	4	3	7	17	19	2	4	8	19	35
Sydney United	28	4	5	19	16	44	17	-28	4	3	8	13	20	0	2	11	3	24

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Tuesday 4 April, 2000



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Bennett brings joy to Power faithful

PARRAMATTA POWER 1

Bennett 87

SOUTH MELBOURNE 0

Friday night at Parramatta Stadium, Sydney. Crowd 3,833.



MATCH STATS:



PARRAMATTA POWER: M Gibson, M Blagojevic (C), R Plesa, M Byrnes, S Eagleton (P Bennett 73), J Vrkic, S Berry (J Gibson 77), W Ardone, M Sterjovski, A Elrich, J Angelucci (J Griffiths 61).



SOUTH MELBOURNE: C Jones, S Iosifidis, S Panopoulos, F de Amicis, R Liparoti, N Orlic, J Tsekinis (J Anastasiadis 73), R Alagich (D Clarkson 56), P Trimboli (C) (G Lozanovski 63), A Magnacca, V Coventy.

Yellows:

Parramatta: Joe Vrkic 22.
South Melbourne: Anthony Magnacca 78.

Best Players:
3 STEVE EAGLETON
2 Anthony Magnacca
1 Milan Blagojevic

Referee: Matthew Breeze



Steve Eagleton: the underrated Power midfielder had a strong game.

By Paul Goodwin

Parramatta had so many chances against South Melbourne on Friday night that many at the ground could have been forgiven for thinking that by the 87th minute they had run out of them and would have to settle for a draw.

That too was coach David Mitchell's thinking, as he admitted after the game.

That all changed when the man who scored Power's first ever goal in NSL soccer came off the bench and combined with

another substitute to net the winner in exuberant style.

Peter Bennett had provided the stoppage-time equaliser in the historic opener against Marconi to earn his side a point back in October, but he went one better this time by garnering all three.

Influential playmaker Milan Blagojevic won an aerial tussle 35 yards out, nodded the ball skywards for Bennett, lurking on the left, and the tough defender exchanged further headed passes with Joel Griffiths as he worked his way into the box.

Bennett then drew the keeper and lobbed the ball into the centre of the net, the late dip allowing it to just bounce under the bar.

Both Griffiths and Bennett had added much spark to the tiring Parramatta team, which had thrown everything at South Melbourne but really did look like being beaten both by the clock and their own wayward finishing.

It was a big team effort with every player putting in after a pre-game warning by Mitchell about pride and the need to closely examine the renewal of their contracts.

The coach paid tribute after the game to his team for their effort and made special mention of Mike Gibson who has stood in with distinction for the injured Andrew Crews for three months, and will now return to his role of goalkeeping coach.

Gibson has played his last NSL game, according to Mitchell.

Well, we'll have to see about that.

South Melbourne knew that only a win would help their finals series' cause and they too attacked with purpose, but like their opponents their luck in front of goal deserted them, in their case entirely.

South's substitutes failed to inject the necessary extra impetus, unlike their Power counterparts, with Goran Lozanovski roaming around the midfield and John Anastasiadis twice seeing the ball near goal.

It would be taking too much space here to describe in full the litany of chances which were squandered. Suffice to say that Mile Sterjovski toiled all evening and saw numerous shots go wide or straight to the South's keeper Chris Jones.

Jones drew the shots like a magnet; every time Parramatta got within shooting distance they fired one in, but everything, no matter how well-struck or intended, was taken by him with the minimum of fuss.

And when he was left exposed completely, the Parramatta forwards managed to steer their shots wide or over the bar.

At the other end Anthony Magnacca broke clear of his marker constantly and gave Mark Byrnes a torrid time, but he also could not find his touch inside the six-yard box.

Typical of Power's luck in the first half was a moment in the 35th when Jon Angelucci found Steve Eagleton with a through ball, but the industrious flanker hit the bar and the ball went harmlessly over.

Steve Berry then found Sterjovski



Peter Bennett: once again the midfield tyro has come to Power's rescue.

with a superb diagonal pass on the left, allowing the striker to bear down on Jones' goal, but the wily keeper narrowed the angle and the shot shaved the right post when it was intended to creep just inside it.

Chances fell to Walter Ardone, Berry, Blagojevic and Ahmad Elrich, but the home crowd was beginning to think it would not be their side's day despite the big effort.

Eagleton worked tirelessly and eventually gave way to Bennett in the 73rd with Griffiths having already replaced Angelucci.

Both players made the impact needed, combining for the winner.

While Mitchell was a visibly relieved man after the game his opposite number, the highly successful Ange Postecoglou, was merely philosophical.

Quizzed about his decision to leave out Michael Curcija, who had just returned from an Olyroo tour, the South Melbourne coach explained that with a crucial mid-

week game against Adelaide City coming up and seven games still to play, it would not help the player or the team to play him here.

"I didn't want to flog him", he declared.

He felt that his side had played well in patches and it is true that they did threaten once or twice, but some of their players looked jaded, if not out of condition.

Senior players like Paul Trimboli and Vaughan Coventy did not show the drive or influence necessary to turn the game the way of the visitors.

Postecoglou agreed that his team's finals' hopes are almost over, but said that they would aim to win all remaining games starting tomorrow (Wednesday) against the Zebras.

He made no excuses for the outcome on Friday night.

"We'll just hang in there," he said.

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Dubious decisions scupper Olympic's chances

ADELAIDE CITY FORCE 2
Mori 74, 90.
SYDNEY OLYMPIC 0

Friday night at Hindmarsh Stadium, Adelaide. Crowd 5,348.



MATCH STATS



ADELAIDE CITY FORCE: Cagalj, Tobin, Mori, Veart, Sabljak, Vidmar, Cartwright, Kemp (Kim 71), Costanzo, Hassell, Pelosi (Brain 41).



SYDNEY OLYMPIC: Perosh, Thomas, Zoricich, Tsekkenis, Baillie, Juric (Arambasic 46), Cardozo, Emerton, Wilson, Goutzioulis (Zorbas 73), Tome (Sinozic 82).

Yellows:
Force: Vidmar 46

BEST PLAYER:
3. **TOBIN (CITY)**
2. Wilson (Olympic)
1. Costanzo (City)

Referee: Perry Mur

end-to-end thriller which saw Adelaide City become the first team to win five matches in a row this season.

Even Zoran Matic was joking at the post match press conference. Sadly for City, ace striker Claudio Pelosi had to come off just before half time with a hamstring injury. Pelosi is obviously a chief player in the Force's charge towards that elusive finals berth. It would be a cruel blow if Pelosi were out for any matches.

Olympic suffered a similar setback when Ante Juric, who brought the first home save of the season from City's new keeper Adrian Cagalj in only the 4th minute, was replaced at half time due to an aggravation of a groin injury. He is unlikely to play again this season.

Olympic wasted a golden opportunity in the 7th minute when the usually invincible Angelo Costanzo muffed a clearance. Ex-West Adelaide star Pablo Cardozo pounced on the ball and passed wide to Norman Tome for a free run in to goal, but Tome was belatedly called offside after the referee's assistant on the far side dropped his flag as Tome sped goalward.

A minute later Cardozo, Brett Emerton, Coast FM Player of the Match Alex Tobin and Michael Cartwright were involved in a series of mad scrambles in the penalty area. The ball was finally cleared for one corner, then another for the visitors.

Cardozo pumped the ball in high. Aurelio Vidmar fell over, leaving Tome with a clear shot but another chance went begging for Olympic.

Determined to make Olympic pay, City revved up a gear.

With Lindsay Wilson sticking like gum to Damion Mori, Matthew Kemp took charge of the attack. He dodged his way up the pitch from the back and laid the ball off to Nick Sabljak on the edge of the penalty area, but he couldn't control it.

Emerton fired in a low shot to the far post but Cagalj saved again.

Then it was Olympic's turn to make a defensive error, giving Kemp an open chance, but Kemp blasted his shot way over the bar.

City continued to pile on the pressure.

Carl Veart sent a long ball forward for Mori, but big Chris Zoricich cleared. Veart gained possession again, pumping the ball long for Vidmar. Vidmar headed the ball high into the box for Pelosi whose headed shot went over the bar.

Olympic's best player Wilson combined with Emerton to zig-zag up the pitch and win a throw on the left. Zoricich hurled the ball into the penalty area but the move ended in an offside.

City raced into counter attack through Pelosi, but John Perosh was off his line in a flash, diving on Pelosi's boot to save. Mori then sent the ball wide to Pelosi on the right, who slammed a cross into the box, only to see Kemp miss the connection by centimetres.

Half a minute later Olympic replied, Cardozo cracking in a long shot from the right, forcing Cagalj into a fingertip save.

Wilson and Emerton combined again with Emerton shooting to no avail.

City took a quick free kick just outside the area, Mori headed goalward, but

Perosh again came to Olympic's rescue.

Half a minute later Sabljak almost put City ahead with a vicious left foot shot which ricocheted off the left hand post.

Cardozo replied with a shot off target, then Emerton almost got the better of Cagalj with a looping header, but City's new boy leaped to save on the line.

City then pressured for a succession of corners on the right hand side, but Wilson cleared every when it mattered.

Emerton and Scott Thomas persistently built up chances down the right, but Tobin stood impassable like the Rock of Gibraltar.

Bradley Hassell came into the action for City, combining with Mori but shooting across the face of goal.

Mori then took out his frustrations on the Press, latching onto a Costanzo pass with a stinging shot flying wide of the right hand post, almost decapitating a cameraman.

Olympic, as desperate to score as City, then turned the thumbscrews on City.

Tome gained possession in the centre of midfield and passed to Emerton who sent Wilson away down the left on the overlap. Wilson deftly flicked the ball into the box for Emerton, but just as he set himself to shoot from the byeline, Cartwright slid in with a superb tackle.

The next minute, there were shouts of 'penalty' as Vidmar was seemingly pushed off the ball in the box, but Perry Mur signalled 'play on'.

Incensed by the appeal, Olympic surged forward. George Goutzioulis, who had a magnificent game, smashed a shot straight at Cagalj, forcing him to take two grabs.

With the score deadlocked at 0-0 and only seconds to half time, Vidmar vented his frustration by grabbing Thomas after the speedster went past him, earning the only booking of the match.

The second half was played in much the same vein as the first, but City gradually took the upper hand.

Without Junc, who was inspirational in defence and attack, Olympic looked less dangerous.

His replacement Zlatko Arambasic had a few chances to score, but the team looked unsettled.

Emerton began to show signs of jet lag, making Tobin, Costanzo and Cartwright's jobs easier.

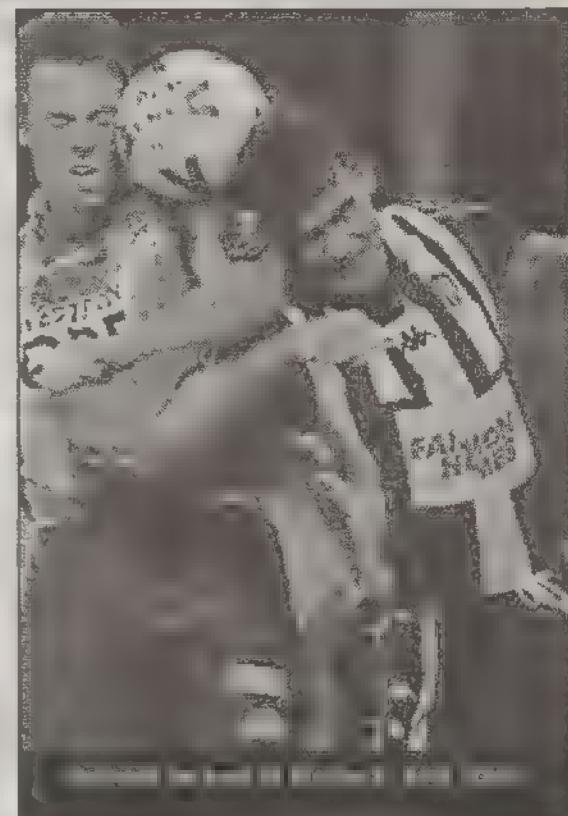
Mori gained more and more space, slamming a shot over Perosh in the 55th minute. The crowd started to celebrate but the ball hit the right hand post!

With the tension and frustration mounting, both sides began giving the ball away. The fans were getting restless when a glimmer of light appeared in the form of Wilson apparently pulling Mori back by the shirt in the penalty box. 'Penalty!' 'No', said referee Mur.

As if this wasn't controversial enough, shortly afterwards Arambasic ran onto a pass from Cardozo and shot - Goal?

As Olympic celebrated, the referee looked to his assistant, only to see the flag up for offside.

Then more controversy. Sabljak lofted the ball into the box from a corner on the left, Mori jumped to head, then



sprawled on the pitch. No whistle, but the ball fell to Louis Brain who lost possession. Suddenly, the whistle - Penalty!

The ref had spotted a push on Mori but allowed play to go to advantage. When City lost the advantage, he pointed to the spot, earning him the most controversial moment of the match award.

Mori, in his usual calm style, slotted the penalty into the back of the net: 1-0 City in the 75th minute.

The game got a bit rough, but City were on the up, and it was no surprise to see them score another goal right on the final whistle.

Hassell charged up the pitch, held the ball while Mori got into a perfect position, then slotted it through for the super striker to go one on one with Perosh. Mori drew Perosh out, then angled the ball to the keeper's right. Perosh managed to deflect it, but couldn't stop it from spinning into the left hand corner: 2-0 City.



By Margaret Bowden and Donald Campbell

This surrogate derby brought many former West Adelaide supporters to Hindmarsh to cheer for Sydney Olympic. Fans were also out in force to see the Radio All Stars demolish the TV No Stars 3-0 in the curtain raiser, refereed by IS columnist Donald Campbell.

With the City fans in the main Western stand and the Olympic supporters across the pitch in the Eastern stand, a West versus East shouting match reverberated over the players for the full 90 minutes.

The noise lifted both teams, and even though Olympic coach Branko Culina was disappointed with some of his players' performances over the final 15 minutes, and was not too complimentary towards the referee, the fans relished this

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Sermann despairs as Carlton keeps winning

CANBERRA COSMOS 0 CARLTON 2

Markovski 28, Moriera 89

Friday night at Bruce Stadium, Canberra. Crowd 1,984.



MATCH STATS:



CANBERRA
COSMOS: Barlow,
Popovich, Polak
(Prenzski 75), Winnie,
Musitano (Castro 76),
Hamilton, James
(Kolpak 58), Hooker, Clark, Roberts,
Gonzalez



CARLTON:
Anastasiadis,
McPherson, Deans,
Marth, Slater (Monera
66), Atkinson,
Lapsanski, Markovski
(Conroy 74), Packer (Colosimo 87),
Vasilevski, Horvat.

Yellows:
Cosmos: Gonzalez (90)

Best Players:
3: D. MCPHERSON (CARLTON)
2: J. Markovski (Carlton)
1: A. Clark (Cosmos)

Referee: Mark Shield



By Nick Guoth

Carlton moved one step closer to securing a berth in the Finals for this season. Their 2-0 win over a rather lacklustre Canberra Cosmos continued their current run of successes giving the club its fourth win in five matches after a horror two month stretch.

Carlton coach Stuart Munro has been pleased with his team. "We've been working hard. Our bad run is out of the way and now things are coming together and we are now in a good position to make the finals".

The game was rather similar to that four weeks earlier when Carlton also scored a 2-0

win. A lot of hard work by the Canberra outfit was undone through a few minutes of poor defence.

It has been frustrating for the Canberra coach and the second goal was just too much for Tom Sermann to bear. He was pleased with his team's effort in the second half "and then suddenly in one minute you ruin 45 minutes good work and this is the soul-destroying thing about this team and what is driving me to despair", Sermann said.

"The thing I find hard to suffer is that had we done all that and come off 0-1, I could say well done, good effort second half, we were just beaten by a better side. There was no disgrace in that, but there is disgrace when in the last minute we concede a goal the way we did", Sermann added.

The visitors started off the game the more positive and made Canberra work hard for the ball, yet it took until the 7th minute before either team made an effort towards goal.

A free-kick from Steve Horvat found Andrew Marth in the goal area, but his header was mis-directed and floated across goal safely.

In the next minute Canberra had a small sniff when Michael Musitano turned in from the sideline after some good work with Andrew Clark and sent a ball into the box. It was just weighted a little too hard and Harry James could not latch on to it as it glided towards Dean Anastasiadis in goals.

Marth headed over from a Stuart Slater cross a few minutes on before Andrew Packer tested Grant Barlow for the first time of the night, the keeper very much up to the task.

At the quarter of an hour mark Canberra should have scored. Musitano sent a cross into the box from the left and when James challenged for the ball it fell to Paul Roberts. He had time to settle but placed his shot straight at the keeper.

The game settled for the next ten minutes before a complete hash led to the first Carlton goal. A freekick in defence for the Cosmos went to Topica Popovich. As he dawdled with the ball, Packer robbed him and layed it on a plate for John Markovski to shoot.

The ex-Cosmos striker sent his thunderous shot against the left upright. It rebounded to him and his second attempt was deflected away by a prone David Winnie.

From the ensuing corner the ball went back out to Daniel Vasilevski. His cross was missed by everyone, including Barlow. It fell to the feet of Markovski who, with the easiest of his three chances to date, tapped the ball in from 5m out.

Carlton pushed forward and Barlow pulled off a solid save from a McPherson thunderbolt. Canberra tried valiantly to get back into the game, but couldn't with the solidity of the Carlton defence and especially with the presence of McPherson.

At the change of ends Canberra came out the much hungrier and as luck was not with them a superb chance went begging. Just two minutes into the half Jason Polak threw the ball in for Gaby Gonzalez.

Gonzalez turned and volleyed towards goal. Anastasiadis was unsure of the trajectory of the ball and decided to punch it out, but James was following in. The ball rebounded straight off the chest of the striker and unfortunately for him away from goal and to safety.



A few minutes later and Roberts saw his solid shot deflected over for a corner. This was followed by an attempt from Markovski at the other end which Barlow had no real problems with.

Neither side could really penetrate and even though corners were conceded, the threats were extinguished with some ease. Carlton were setting in trying to maintain their one goal advantage, yet making sure they didn't concede a goal.

Canberra, too, were fighting hard, penetrating many times down the wing of Clark, but never really generating a dangerous attempt to equalise.

It took until the 84th minute of the game before a serious challenge to change the scoreline. A corner kick from Lubo Lapsanski found his midfield teammate Marth, but again his header went over the bar.

With just over five minutes left Vasilevski should have done better when presented with a

volleying opportunity on the edge of the box, yet he sent his shot well wide of the mark.

Canberra's last chance came as time was running out. A free-kick some 25m out was tapped to Ilya Prenzski by Roberts only to see the young substitute send his drive over the bar.

Then to finish off the game a kick-out from Anastasiadis found his attackers two against three, yet the ball eluded Cosmos defender David Winnie allowing Alex Moriera to latch onto it and run towards goal.

His finish was superb beating Barlow at the near post with a well placed shot.

Munro was wary of his opponents on the day stating "we knew it was always going to be difficult for us given Canberra's form in the last few weeks and we felt if we started the game well we should win".

He was all praise for his defence and his forwards. "It was good that the two main strikers scored tonight", Munro added.

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BRISBANE STRIKERS 2

Grierson 19, North 42

NEWCASTLE BREAKERS 2

John Buonavoglia 61, 70

Saturday night at Suncorp Metway Stadium, Brisbane. Crowd: 2,093.

MATCH STATS:



BRISBANE

STRIKERS: 1. Bolton, 2. Gwynne, 3. Stefanutto, 9. Foster, 10. Sroj, 12. Dwyer, 13. McLaren, 14. North, 16. Grierson (6 Ditton 84'), 18. Meredith (7. Smeltz 31' (11. Hews 66')), 21. McKain.



NEWCASTLE

BREAKERS: 1. Catlin, 2. Pryce, 3. Roberts, 5 McManus, 6. Sprod (16 Trpevski 67'), 7. Dodd, 8. Wilson (23 Smith 34'), 10. Buonavoglia, 13. Wieczorek (14. Owens 48'), 18. Harper, 22. Moore.

Yellow: Nil

Best Players:
3. JOHN BUONAVOGLIA (BREAKERS)
2. Peter Grierson (Brisbane)
1. Peter Dwyer (Brisbane)

Referee: Gerry Connolly

It took the Strikers around ten minutes to stamp their authority on the game.

Paul Foster got on the end of a long cross from teammate Nick Meredith, and his header drew a good save from Bob Catlin between the Newcastle sticks.

Brisbane's first goal came just before the 20-minute mark, and it was a Peter Grierson classic.

Grierson's long, mazy run up the centre of the field left plenty of embarrassed Newcastle defenders in his wake, and he finished it off with a neatly curled left-footed shot which beat Catlin and gave the Strikers a deserved lead.

He almost doubled the score just minutes later with a well-taken free kick from 25 metres out. Grierson's direct shot beat the Newcastle wall and drew a good save from Catlin.

The Strikers' barrage showed no signs of letting up as Peter Dwyer and Wayne Sroj combined well to set up a great chance. Sroj's final shot was well blocked by the stoic Newcastle defence.

Meredith and Mark Wilson were both replaced after a heavy collision shortly afterwards. Both players required extensive treatment and were substituted shortly afterwards.

For Meredith, it emerged later the injury could spell the end of his season.

It took Newcastle 37 minutes to have their first real chance. Brad Wieczorek's clever juggling set up John Buonavoglia for a close-range curling shot. It beat Strikers keeper Clint Bolton, but went wide of the far post.

Newcastle rueled the missed opportunity as they found themselves further behind five minutes later.

Dwyer's long cross beat Newcastle defender Glenn Sprod and found a flying Jade North on his way towards goal.

North fired the ball past Catlin to score his first goal of the season, and celebrated in acrobatic style in the tradition of former Strikers star Kasey Wehrman.

The score remained 2-0 to the Strikers going into the half time break, and the home side could have been forgiven for thinking the game was in the bag. But they did not count on a spirited Breakers comeback.

The Breakers lifted a gear, and in the 61st minute, Shane Pryce headed a corner into the crossbar.

The ball rebounded through a sea of Brisbane legs and fell to Buonavoglia, who made no mistake in blasting it past Bolton.

If anything, Buonavoglia's goal made Newcastle more determined and a Breakers equaliser was always on the cards.

Bolton was called into action twice before Buonavoglia struck again in the 70th minute after some brilliant work by Strikers reject Andy Harper.

Harper easily got past defenders Stuart McLaren and Jon McKain at the byline with sublime footwork and a strong, determined run.

He cut the ball back to the unmarked Buonavoglia who was waiting on the spot to blast the ball past Bolton from close

range.

Harper has been enjoying his form reversal since joining the Breakers, and was quick to share his delight with a Brisbane crowd that never saw him display any great form in his two years with the Strikers.

Both sides lifted their intensity to claim all three points on offer, but neither side could break the deadlock and the game finished in a 2-2 draw, a result that favoured neither side.

Fuming Brisbane coach John Kosmina said the Strikers still had a mathematical, if not realistic, chance to make the Top Six.

"We've just got to win six games now - simple," he said.

"They showed a lot more hunger and desire in the second half than we did. They worked their backsides off while our guys dropped.

"Their defence played really well, they put their bodies on the line, and we just couldn't get behind them."

When asked what happened in the second half, Kosmina was clearly agitated.

"I don't know - you tell me," he said.

"I thought we played superbly in the first half."

"We just had to keep our shape - we started giving the ball away and it just got progressively worse. Newcastle upped their intensity and we didn't go with them. We've got enough experienced players to make sure that doesn't happen, but they fell into a bit of a hole as well."

Lee Sterrey was clearly the happier of the two coaches.

"There's not many teams in this league who could come back from 0-2 away to Brisbane," he said.

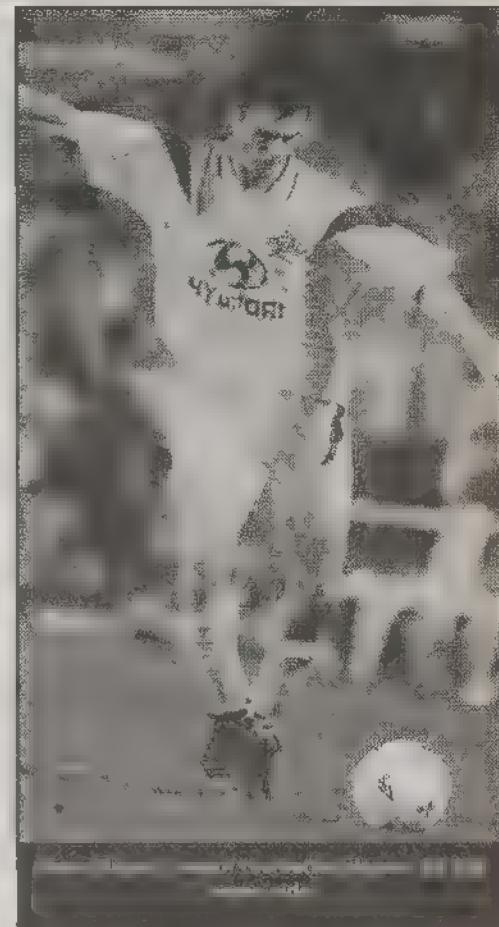
"We came here for three points, but I think a draw was a fair result at the end of the day."

Sterrey said he was also happy to damage Brisbane's play-off hopes to ensure Newcastle's Top Six survival.

"It makes Brisbane's run home a lot tougher, and hopefully that's one club that can't catch us out of the equation now," he said.

Sterrey said the Breakers played exceptionally well in the second half, but he was far from happy about the first half performance.

"You couldn't print what I said to them at half time," he said.



"The intensity and hunger that Newcastle is known for - we've always run our legs off, we've always worked hard and had a great work ethic - none of that was there in the first half."

"At this stage of the season, we can't afford not to be hungry."

Despite Newcastle's position on the table, Sterrey said nobody in the Hunter Valley is thinking of championship glory just yet.

"Why would Newcastle think about a title in the National League when you look at where they've been and where they've come from?" he said.

"We've only been thinking about the Six. Whatever happens after the Six is a bonus."

As for John Buonavoglia, this was his fourth goal in four days. On the Tuesday prior he scored two goals to help his side take the three points over Canberra (match report page 26).

His value to Breakers, as they move into a possible first time finals appearance, is immense.



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Kingz spoil Sekulovski's promising debut

**GIPPSLAND FALCONS 0
FOOTBALL KINGZ 2**

Campbell 31, Suri 77.

Saturday night at Mobil Park, Morwell. Crowd 1,700.



MATCH STATS:



GIPPSLAND FALCONS: Jevdjovic, Fak, Gotis, MacNicol (Mandic 70m), Vargas, Bell, Puca (Katz 73), Hutchinson (Robertson 90), Savage, Marcina, Sekulovski.



FOOTBALL KINGZ: Duke, Bunce, Perry, Stergiopoulos (Kenyon 58m), Jackson, Campbell (Hickey 66m), Ngata, Osman, Suri, Vichelich, Jones (Rufer 80),

Yellows:

Kingz: Marcus Stergiopoulos 77, Lee Jones 90.

Best Players:

3. BATRAM SURI (KINGZ)
2. Ivan Vichelich (Kingz)
1. Naum Sekulovski (Falcons)

Referee: Simon Micallef

By Jodie Newell

Anticipation of a highly physical and competitive game was the general consensus amongst scribes at Mobil Park before kick off.

This would be the first time the Kingz had ventured to Mobil Park, and also the first time goalkeeper Daniel Duke would line up in the Kingz squad after the departure of mainstay Michael Utting who had left for South Africa during the week.

For the Falcons the big story of the week was the signing and immediate inclusion of Naum Sekulovski, a 17-year old from the VIS.

His presence would hopefully bring much needed scoring ability, something of which has been a major problem for the Falcons this season.

It was an almost fairytale start for Sekulovski when, in the first 30 seconds of

the game, Brian MacNicol crossed a ball into the six yard area, where Sekulovski almost connected for an early goal.

The opening minutes lived up to the anticipation of a physical clash, with players from both sides contesting the ball fiercely.

Batram Suri was the first player to impress, as he challenged hard for the ball and provided some delightfully finessed passes in and around the midfield.

Harry Ngata and Jeff Campbell up front were working hard to capitalise on Suri's efforts.

Fourteen minutes into the game Harry Ngata was the first to test Falcons keeper Bojo Jevdjovic after heading a cross from Campbell, it was off target and went over the bar.

The Falcons forward set up of Hutchinson, MacNicol and Sekulovski were also working hard with good supply provided by Andy Vargas in midfield.

Manny Gotis at times moved up forward to add height in the forward zone and nearly connected with a fine cross from Robbie Puca at the 15 minute mark.

Due to the hard fought nature of the tackles it wasn't long before referee Simon Micallef made his first booking of the match, at the 16 minute mark, from a challenge by Lee Jones of the Kingz on the Falcons midfielde Clayton Bell.

Jones fell heavily on Bell who appeared to be suffering a knock to the rib area and needed assistance.

Both sides launched counterattacks, with the height of Bunce and Vichelich shutting down the Falcons forwards, whilst at the other end defenders Dean Fak and Adrian Savage repelled continual attacks by the Kingz.

The Kingz efforts up front were eventually rewarded at the 31 minute mark, when Lee Jones pushed a ball out wide for Batram Suri who put in a long, high cross, Falcons keeper Bojo Jevdjovic attempted to tip the ball over and out only to find Jeff Campbell waiting in the six yard area, where he put the ball into the back of the net with a solid strike to give the Kingz the lead.



Football Kingz: they just won't let go with their finals dreams in their first season. The win over Falcons keeps them in the running.

Falcons counterattacked, but were unable to penetrate the defence, with Che Bunce and Ivan Vichelich still continually winning the high balls.

In the 41st minute a possible glimpse of things to come for Falcons fans, Sekulovski skilfully took on two Kingz defenders turning them inside out and then took a shot on goal only to see his efforts pushed wide of the mark.

Falcons continued to push forward with a Manny Gotis shot going wide as well.

The Kingz after gaining the lead looked to defend rather than attack and soaked up a lot of Falcons forward pressure.

The tactic worked and at half time the lead was still in the Kingz' favour.

The beginning of the second half saw the Kingz in an attacking mood.

Marcus Stergiopoulos provided good supply in the midfield, whilst some clever passing from Ngata and Suri kept the Gippsland defence busy.

To Gippsland's credit they worked hard to create scoring opportunities.

At the 55 minute mark a well struck free kick taken by Andy Vargas tested Kingz keeper Daniel Duke who saved the 25m drive.

During the 58 minute mark, Falcons received three corners in a row but were unable to convert.

Shortly after this flurry, Marcus Stergiopoulos - returning to where his career first began - and who had been one of the Kingz better players, was taken off

the park after he had appeared to have sustained a leg injury and limped to the bench.

Substitutions continued in the 66 minute mark when Kingz goalscorer Jeff Campbell was replaced Noah Hickey.

Gippsland continued pushing forward and were almost rewarded with a goal at the 70 minute mark when Andy Vargas crossed a ball to Brian McNichol only to see his efforts cleared by Kingz defender Che Bunce who was playing a solid game.

The game's best highlight came in the 77 minute when Batram Suri took on Falcons defender Dean Fak outside the penalty area.

Suri turned his opponent inside out and then took a shot to beat keeper Jevdjovic comprehensively.

It was Suri's first goal for the season and one he shall surely put down as one of his career's finest.

The Kingz confidence seemed to rise after the Suri goal and the impressive Ivan Vichelich, who had been repelling many Gippsland attacks, decided to come forward and attempt a 30m drive at the 82 minute mark, only to see it go just wide of the target.

In the final minutes Gippsland tried hard to get on the board but were unable to do so and the Kingz ran out comfortable winners 2-0, keeping their slim finals hopes alive with a solid away performance.

Gippsland Falcons has taken further steps towards improving its relationships with soccer clubs and schools in the region by appointing five junior development officers to assist club vice-captain and senior development officer Manny Gotis.

The new junior development officers are John Hutchinson, Robert Puca, Michael Katz, Jon Buhagiar and Ben Cassar who all live in the Gippsland area.

They are full time with the club which is the most crucial part of the new concept.

According to Gotis, the Gippsland Sports and Entertainment Club, home of the Gippsland Falcons, is determined to become a leader in this area providing national sporting identities for not only soccer clinics but all the sports fans in the Gippsland and beyond areas.

This is the first time ever that the club has taken initiative to employ full time staff to carry out development work and I commend the new board for backing this concept.

'Our aim is to build our supporter base for the future, but to also spend quality time with all the people who are interested to find out what soccer has to offer them', he explained.

Italian giant Valsport has jumped at the opportunity to again support the development concept with the Gippsland Falcons and according to Gotis this will be a major boost for both organisations.

'Valsport are making big inroads in Australia and we are proud that we have been chosen by them to assist with the promotion of their products.'

'Their boots and clothing range have to be seen to be believed and we look forward to working with David Magrone to assist his company added Gotis.'

Clinics and various promotions have commenced already and will continue with the backing of Valsport, McDonald's Family Restaurants, Federation Health and the Victorian Soccer Federation who all support the club in promoting soccer in the region, which Gotis says is vital for the club's future NSL status.



The Gippsland Falcons development team will also provide specialised training for all local and representative teams in the pre-season.

During the off season this has never happened before and this will be the key.

according to Gotis, in enabling the club to be more accountable and develop much stronger relationships with all concerned.

Glory stays top but fails to impress

PERTH GLORY 2
Edwards 17, Ergic 84.
SYDNEY UNITED 0

Sunday night at Perth Oval, Perth. Crowd: 10,265.



MATCH STATS:



PERTH GLORY:
Petkovic, Trajkovski, Harnwell, Thorp, Valle (Ergic 24), Naven, Miller, Edgar, Edwards, Despotovski (Carbone 76), Buljan (Aurelio 58).



SYDNEY UNITED:
Hughes, Bozinovski, Rakic (Bosevski 76), Rastall, Kupresak, Palapanis, Savoca, Moric, Genc (Saric 73), Jerman (Usljebrka 58), Podeljak.

Yellow Cards:

Glory: Naven 7, Despotovski 14.
United: Podeljak 7, Palapanis 34, Savoca 39, Moric 63.

Best Player:

3. EDWARDS (GLORY)
2. Edgar (Glory)
1. Aytek Genc (United)

Referee: Eddie Lennie

By Dennis Gedling

Perth Glory stumbled to a very unconvincing 2-0 win over last placed Sydney United last Sunday at Perth Oval.

Goals from Alistair Edwards and Ivan Ergic were the difference between a home side that was woefully lazy and wasteful, and a stubborn defensive visiting team that could only blame its terrible finishing for not taking any points.

Troy Halpin and Kasey Wehrman came back from suspension and international duty respectively but were not included in the Glory squad. Halpin was amazingly left out by coach Bernd Stange for 'not training hard enough' whilst Wehrman returned to Perth with an injury and flu which left him no choice but to miss another match.

Perth was soon on the attack and was unlucky not to go ahead after only three minutes. Robert Trajkovski getting into the action early and sending a long cross over to Scott Miller (back from his honeymoon) who headed just wide.

Sydney Utd were on the attack from

the resulting goal kick and should have made more of a chance when a forward got past a lagging Hamilton Thorp but the cross wasn't good enough and caused no problems to Jason Petkovic.

The first of many bookings occurred in the ninth minute after Tom Podeljak retaliated to a tough tackle from a Glory player and remonstrated. Edwards joined in the scuffle and was lucky not to get booked himself.

Bobby Despotovski was booked for a late, clumsy tackle in the first uneventful quarter of an hour but the home side soon went ahead when a free kick was headed in by Edwards. The kick was taken from just outside the area finding Edwards whose free header went past the keeper.

Five minutes after the goal Despotovski created a great chance for Buljan who was set free but his touch was terrible.

The young striker had only the keeper to beat but a defender had to pull off a miraculous tackle to stop him in the penalty area.

Dion Valle surprisingly made way for Ergic midway through the first half with the big blond defender seemingly uninjured.

Glory's first blunder in defence occurred when a long hopeful cross by a United player had Thorp retreating to head the ball, but he didn't hear the keeper coming, the ball being split as a result.

The loose ball fell to Mano Jerman who had no keeper to beat but his shot went wide, a golden opportunity and the Glory very lucky to still be in the lead.

In the second half things went from bad to worse in the skill level stakes. Both sides made awful errors with Glory the more guilty of giving away the ball.

Any long balls designed for Buljan were wasted because of the striker's lack of pace.

On the other hand the pace of United forwards was worrying the Glory defence with the very quick Aytek Genc constantly getting behind the home side's stoppers.

Buljan once again had another chance to score but the chance went begging - Despotovski's pass giving the former Olyroo space but his final touch letting him down once more.

This miss was the final straw for Stange who immediately brought on Aurelio.

Sydney were now starting to look the more likely to score in the match. Thorp twice made horrendous errors in his own half which gave the ball back to United, only poor finishing letting the big defender off the hook.



Aurelio's inclusion into the game slowly got the Glory ball rolling again. The Brazilian's pace and skill shining against a tiring United defence.

Glory wasted another chance when an inch perfect cross from Trajkovski found Despotovski running into head the ball but his effort amazingly went over the bar.

This proved to be the final foul up for the other starting striker for the Glory when he too was subbed for Carbone who slotted into a forward role.

The inability of the two Glory strikers to put away easy chances frustrating teammates, the coaching staff and definitely the crowd.

Glory finally put the game to rest when Aurelio set up the second goal. He held up the ball and gave a slick pass into the path of Ergic who calmly slotted the ball past the keeper.

Aurelio ran to the Glory bench pointing to Stange and hugging him on the sidelines.

Glory was now in cruise control but the crowd got more and more frustrated with time wasting tactics as the final whistle sounded.

After the match Stange said that "I am thankful for the result, we now go further ahead of the pack but we need to improve with only six games to go. There is high expectations and today was not enough."

The Glory head honcho stopped short of criticising his players but did leap to the defence of Buljan and Despotovski who seemed to get worse as the game went on.

When asked about the Halpin saga he said that: "Sometimes players are like children and need to be shown what is wrong, that is what happened to Troy and he knows that."

"Hopefully the next week we will start again as friends and he can prove to me again he is one of the best midfielders in this country."

When asked about Aurelio's running up and embracing of him after the second goal all he said was: "I told him there and then he was starting next week!"

United keeper Brett Hughes fielded questions on behalf of his club and merely said that "We got worn down but tried hard nonetheless. We definitely had our chances, perhaps bad finishing let us down."

Edwards and Edgar were the stand out players for the home side, Edwards may switch back to striker with Halpin most probably returning to face South Melbourne next week.

Jamie Harnwell once again was rock solid with Genc a solid contributor for the visiting Sydney side with his pace and skill.

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QUOTES OF THE WEEK

"If you drop the watermelon it smashes. You can't put the pieces back together. We are trying to put the pieces back together." "Zoran Matic goes for the fruity metaphor to explain, er, something, after the Olympic game." "Don't take any rubbish."

Aussie Soccer legend Craig Johnston's advice to young Novocastrian Josh Maguire who is playing in Romania (see interview on page 26)

"I like little John because he is small and he looks like a kid and he plays good."

Seven-year-old Breakers fan Rachel talking about her favourite Newcastle player John Buonavoglia

Knights run over by Chipps Express



MELBOURNE KNIGHTS 0 WOLLONGONG WOLVES 4

Chipperfield 18, 38, Petrovski 28, 70.

Sunday afternoon at Knights Stadium, Melbourne. Crowd: 3,631.

MATCH STATS:



MELBOURNE KNIGHTS: John; Nastevski, Vukadin, Banini (S Rados 73), Kiratzoglou, Rajher, Silic, Susa (Reda 65), A. Cervinski, Kelic, Urlovic (Matkovic 59).



WOLLONGONG WOLVES: Pogliacomi, Stanton, Ceccoli, D. Cervinski, Mennillo, Spencer (Souris 71), Reid (Robertson 82), Horsley, Chipperfield, Young (Masi 71), Petrovski

Yellow: Nil

Best Players:
3. CHIPPERFIELD (WOLL)
2. Reid (Woll)
1 Pogliacomi (Woll)

Referee: Jeremy Blaney

By Mark Fisher

Melbourne Knights' dreams of participation in this year's finals series were finally smashed on Sunday afternoon when the visiting Wollongong Wolves inflicted a comprehensive 4-0 thrashing on the hapless hosts.

Both sides entered the match with two changes to their starting line-ups, the Knights bringing in Banini and Kelic for Magdic and Abbas, while the Wolves opted for Spencer and Petrovski in place of Robertson and Masi. And the changes had a defining impact on the match, with Petrovski scoring twice while Kelic had one of his more forgettable matches in a memorable career.

The match was effectively over at half-time, with two disastrous defensive errors allowing the Wolves to extend the eighteenth minute lead generated by Scott Chipperfield.

Until then the Knights looked comfortable enough with Mark Silic busy in



Les Pogliacomi: the big keeper did well for Wolves.

midfield and the revamped defensive trio of Dragi Nastevski, Jason Vukadin and Banini seemingly in control.

But the midfield runners of Wollongong were proving a handful and Paul Reid gave a sign of things to come when he was given too much time and space at the top of the 'D'. He quickly sized up the options and picked out Chipperfield on the left hand side of the penalty area, from where the Socceroo midfielder rolled off his marker and stabbed the ball past Martin John.

The Knights responded with a stinging shot from Paul Urlovic which required a fine parry from Les Pogliacomi, while Silic was disappointed minutes later when his appeals for a penalty were turned down although his theatrical fall may have influenced Jeremy Blaney.

But it was at the other end of the park where the Knights would be left looking foolish and after twenty-eight minutes the first of two woeful defensive clangers allowed the Wolves to go 2-0 up.

Joey Rajher's initial attempt to clear was ineffective, but when the job of tidying up fell to Alex Kiratzoglou, he chose to shield the ball and wait for John to collect rather than sink the slipper.

It led to the farcical conclusion of John and Kiratzoglou waiting for each other to take the initiative and while confu-

sion reigned Petrovski simply curled his right leg around the defender and toe-poked the ball across into the far side of the goal.

Unable to believe their luck, the visitors sealed the game ten minutes later when Vukadin was too casual at the back, allowing Chipperfield to block an attempted pass. The ball bounced kindly for the Socceroo who easily drilled the ball past John into the opposite corner.

The Knights were now in disarray and Petrovski will perhaps be rueing two more good chances before the break. The first was wasted when he scuffed his shot in a one-on-one with John, then a powerful goal-bound shot ricocheted off Banini for a corner.

One would expect a 0-3 half-time deficit to produce wholesale changes from the trailing team, but while Vlado Vanis stuck by his starting eleven it was Nick Theodorakopoulos who altered his combination - switching from 4-4-2 to 3-5-2 with Chipperfield dropping back into a more orthodox left midfield position.

This resulted in more time and space for the Knights to launch attacks but too often the offensive forays came to nothing. And Pogliacomi was having no trouble with the high balls pumped in.

The Knights' best chance came just before the hour mark when a Mark Silic cross was met by an Ivan Kelic downward header, but the ball was too close to Pogliacomi to cause genuine concern.

Kiratzoglou fired a rasping shot just over the bar minutes later, but the Wolves got their fourth twenty minutes from time to further demoralise the home team.

Noel Spencer played a well-weighted ball through the inside right channel where Matt Horsley overcame the attentions of Rajher and squared the ball across the six yard box for the grateful Petrovski to tap in for his second of the match.

The persistent Knights continued to search for a consolation goal and after substitute Michael Reda had tried his luck from long range, were almost rewarded when Dragi Nastevski came forward from sweeper and finally beat Pogliacomi with a daisy-cutter.

Unfortunately for the Olyroo, David Cervinski, perhaps the Wolves' most consistent player this season, came to his keeper's rescue with a right foot goal line clearance.

It clinched an all-too-rare clean sheet for the Wolves, and Nick Theodorakopoulos was conscious of his team's poor defensive record after the match, and of the positive effect it has had on the rest of his side.

"The players are smart enough to realise that 1-0 is not enough - conceding thirty-eight goals this year has been our Achilles Heel."

He was also quick to further promote his side's attacking capabilities, despite notching just three wins from their previous nine outings.

"We weren't that far from giving them a team a hiding. Against the Kingz we could have had anywhere between ten and twelve."

Vlado Vanis was typically reserved after the match, almost relieved that his team was now out of



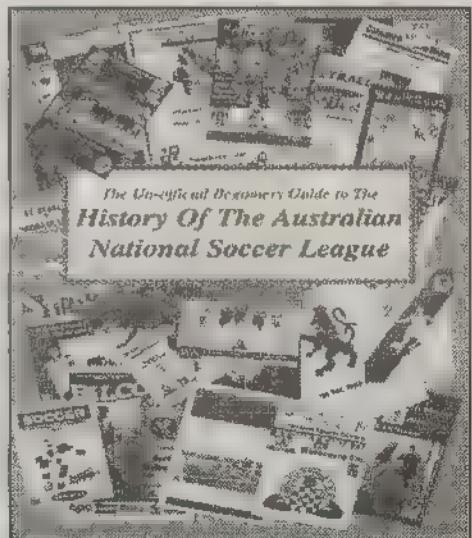
the finals race and planning for next season can now begin in earnest.

"It was the team's worst performance under me. I was very disappointed. It was probably the Wolves' easiest game for three years. Today we had only one player. I could have played (better) today - at 105 kilograms. There were two players out there today who won't have contracts next year if I'm here."

So while Vanis intends promoting a couple of younger players in readiness for next season, Nick Theodorakopoulos can look forward to, well, not the heights you may expect.

"Our aim is the top six and hopefully we'll achieve that by Round 31. I know I'm boring but I'm not going to talk about the championship."

Maybe not, but if his strikers can stretch their current vein of form into May, then Nick will have to reassess his aim. And fast.



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Babic seals another Marconi win



MARCONI STALLIONS 3

Awaritefe 50, own goal 75, Z. Babic 95

NORTHERN SPIRIT 2

Langdon 55, Bilokapic pen. 82.

Sunday night at the Marconi Stadium, Sydney. Crowd: 6,235.

MATCH STATS:



MARCONI STALLIONS
Turnbull, Kim, Babic M. (Zonic 46), Longo, Gibson Invincible, Renaud, Care (Trajanovski 78), Maloney (Di Gia 88), Awaritefe, Babic Z.



NORTHERN SPIRIT:
Henderson, Bingley, Rudan Bilokapic, Cranney, Langdon, Cunico, Enes, Bertie (Crook 77), Slater (Griffiths R 53), Catanzaro.



Yellows:
Stallions: Awaritefe 22, Invincible 64.
Spirit: Langdon 41, Rudan 66, Bilokapic 68.

Best Players:
3. Renaud (Stallions)
2. Babic (Stallions)
1. Gibson (Stallions)

Referee: Brett Hugo

By John Vratic

This was a pulsating game that Marconi dominated but could never quite get on top of their cross-town rivals on the scoreboard until the very end when they scored a well deserved winner five minutes into injury time.

Just when it seemed that the home team had thrown away two points after Spirit had equalised via a penalty, the visitors' inexperience cost them dearly.

Whilst attacking deep in Marconi's half young Matthew Langdon tried to repeat his earlier goal scoring effort by coming inside instead of crossing the ball but, unforgettably, lost the ball.

The home team were quick to pounce on their last opportunity and quickly took the ball up the other end and crafted a splendid move with the dangerous Zeljko Babic putting the ball past Spirit 'keeper Paul Henderson.

The win was a very important one to Marconi as the three points put them on 48 points and in third spot on the table only four points behind the leaders Wollongong and in good shape to challenge for the important top two positions.

The first half was dominated territorially by Marconi but they had nothing to show on the scoreboard for their efforts.

Brendan Renaud produced the first of many dangerous crosses from the left in the 9th minute when he easily beat Troy Cranney, which he did on numerous occasions throughout the match. He crossed a low ball that Henderson dropped on the near post but was able to recover just in time to prevent Francis Awaritefe from smashing the ball into the back of the net.

Two minutes later Marconi captain Brad Maloney produced one of the moves of the match. He picked up a loose ball just inside the Spirit half, cut inside Michael Cunico with ease and threaded a superb through ball with the outside of his

right foot between two defenders. The beautifully weighted ball travelled perfectly into the path of Chad Gibson whose first time left foot shot was smothered by Henderson who made a last minute decision to come of his goal-line.

The Marconi midfield of Gibson, Maloney, and Christian Care played all over the top of the opponents and the latter two combined in the 20th minute when Care hastily smashed the ball from a throw in on the right that reached Maloney on the edge of the Spirit box. The Marconi captain laid the ball back to Renaud whose right foot placed shot was parried by Henderson but he recovered quickly to prevent further danger.

The onslaught continued and in the 25th minute Zeljko Babic and Renaud combined for the left wing-back to put over a cross that evaded the many legs in the penalty box. The ball was cleared only as far as Awaritefe who turned his men and was able to get away a shot but it was well smothered by Henderson.

The speedy Zeljko Babic created another opportunity when he brilliantly beat two players and passed to Awaritefe inside the box but Paul Bilokapic-tackled him just before he was able to shoot.

Big defender Dominic Longo had another chance in the 31st minute when he was first to reach a corner clearance but his left foot shot on the turn was just wide of Henderson's left post.

Two of Marconi's best players, Babic and Gibson, combined in the 34th minute when the former brilliantly turned his man and fed the ball to Gibson who immediately returned the ball to Babic who kept on running into the box. He let fly with a right foot shot that flew past Henderson just outside the near post.

Robbie Slater had Spirit's best chance when in the 37th minute when he was played into the box by Nicola Bertie but his left foot shot bounced off Michael Turnbull's chest but there was no-one close to take advantage of it.

The speedy Babic created another chance for himself when he again beat his man but his right foot shot was well saved by the Spirit 'keeper.

The bigger Babic, Mark, was replaced for the start of the second half as result of an Achilles Heel injury but the smaller and speedier Zeljko Babic was to the fore soon after the resumption and was instrumental in the first goal.

In the 50th minute Renaud again beat Cranney on the left and crossed a low ball to the near post as Babic made his move towards that spot. Although he didn't get to the ball his presence distracted the defence and the 'keeper and the ball ran towards striking partner Awaritefe on the far post who had no trouble putting the home team into the lead.

Four minutes later Babic headed a free kick from the left back across the goal where Awaritefe's shot was blocked on the goal-line and cleared to safety.

But one minute later a surprising equaliser. Catanzaro played a square ball from the right to Enes who relayed it to Langdon wide on the left. The little wing-back made a trademark surge

inside and gave the ball with his right foot. The shot took a deflection and flew past Turnbull for the equalising goal.

In the 57th minute almost a repeat of Marconi's first goal. A Renaud cross to the near post was again just missed by Babic with Henderson dropping the ball but diving on it just in front of the looming Awaritefe.

Babic came more and more into the game and had a couple of good chances to bring Marconi back into the lead.

In the 65th minute a left foot cross from the right by Danny Invincible reached Babic on the near post but his flick went straight into Henderson's arms.

In the 72nd minute the quicksilver striker took the ball inside the box on the left but his left foot shot was well saved by Spirit's custodian.

Two minutes later Marconi took the lead. A dangerous cross from the right by Gibson saw Mark Rudan and Awaritefe tangle on the near post with the Spirit defender getting to the ball first but deflecting the ball past his 'keeper for an own goal.

Spirit came more into the game towards the end and earned a couple of corners before they equalised from one in the 82nd minute.

A corner kick from the left was cleared to substitute Ian Crook who hit a first time goal bound left foot shot that hit Awaritefe on the arm with the referee Brett Hugo having no hesitation in pointing to the spot.

Paul Bilokapic stepped up and buried the ball with a strong shot to the 'keeper's left for a 2-2 scoreline.

Babic and Renaud were both in the thick of the action as Marconi strived for a last minute winner.

In the 88th minute Babic won the ball in the box and laid it back to replacement Kris Trajanovski whose side foot shot flew just wide of Henderson's right post.

Three minutes into injury time Renaud produced another left wing cross

SCIAZZI BRESOLA



that Awaritefe reached fist but he ballooned his shot over the bar.

Just as it seemed that the game would end in a draw Marconi produced a last gasp winner.

Five minutes into injury time Langdon lost the ball deep inside Marconi's half on the left and the ball was quickly relayed to Invincible on the right. His deep cross flew past the far post and seemed to be out of harm's way before Trajanovski arrived on the scene and somehow kept the ball in play by squaring back across the goal.

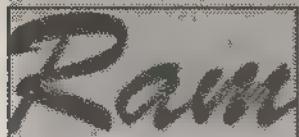
Awaritefe was first to the ball and instead of playing it back to a team-mate just outside the box he back-heeled to the far post where Babic was lurking.

A simple tap in for Babic for a well deserved goal for him and the winner for Marconi.



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INSIDE JUNIOR SOCCER



Kukucka goal wins it for Power

Theo Katsaros reports that in a deferred fixture from Rd 2 on Wednesday night, the Marconi Stallions trounced the Wollongong Wolves Colts by 8 goals to nil.

The win included doubles to Josia Sauturaga Junior and Vlado Zoric.

A side with everything to play for is the Parramatta Power. The Power have increased their lead at the top of the ladder to nine points on the back of their tough 1-0 win over the Newcastle Breakers Colts.

Daniel Kukucka scored his 12th goals this season as the leaders notched up win number 20. With six rounds remaining it looks as though the minor premiership is all wrapped up.

At the other end of the ladder are the Wollongong Wolves Colts. The boys from the Gong emulated the feat of the league leaders as they recorded a 1-0 victory over Sydney United.

The result is the Wolves first three pointer of the season. Panayiotis Tzolakidis scoring in the 80th minute to give the youngsters some joy after a very tough season.

Sydney Olympic crushed the Sydney United Colts in a goal fest at the Sydney United Sports Centre. Recent acquisition Alex Duric scored 4 times for Olympic and Dylan Macallister bagged a hat-trick in the rout.

The Olympians led 4-2 at the break and continued on their merry way scoring a half dozen in the second half. The 10-3 scoreline is the biggest result in this season's competition.

Singles for Olympic were recorded by Lee Miot, John Kynazopoulos and Anthony Doumanis. In reply for Sydney United, Fernando Pellegrino, Agyeman Akwas and Josip Bastac recorded singles.

The Marconi Stallions defeated the Northern Spirit by two goals to one to all but end the Spirit's minor premiership aspirations. The Stallions have a number of games in hand over the top sides and may surge into finals contention if they can overcome a gruelling schedule over the next month.

Josia Sauturaga Junior opened the scoring for the Stallions in the 26th minute as the visitors took a one goal advantage into the second half. After the break, James Monie levelled for the Spirit but the joy was short lived as the Stallions restored their lead a minute later.

Daniel Severino netting for the 15th time this season to hand his team a solid victory. The late send-off of Simon Miller added to the Spirit's dismal day.

A Sean Cranney goal after 14 minutes sunk the A.I.S. at Christie Park. The Northern Spirit Colts have produced some fine performances this season and can now boast the scalp of last season's National Champions to their impressive list.

The Newcastle Breakers thumped the Q.A.S. in Brisbane despite trailing early. Matthew Bell gave the hosts the lead after 15 minutes but the Novocastrians fought back to record an emphatic 5-1 win. The Breakers took a 2-1 lead into the break, courtesy of goals to Luke Tomich and Peter Juchniewicz.

Daniel Varma was sent off in the 72nd minute for the Q.A.S. and from the ensuing penalty Robert Angievski capitalised to increase the lead to 3-1. The Breakers then took full advantage of the extra man as Joshua Rufo and Chris Tancheski added singles late in the match.

The Wollongong Wolves travelled to Wentworth Park and took maximum points from their clash with the Sydney Olympic Academy. The Wolves led when Paul O'Grady scored after 25 minutes. Steven Markovski doubled the lead in the 57th minute but the lead was halved minutes later as Vedran Jaganic netted for the home side.

A double blow halted Olympic's charge five minutes later as Hussein Jomaa was sent-off and the Wolves netted again. Ben Blake adding the third to end the

contest after 68 minutes.

On Friday evening Chris Conti saw the ACT Academy of Sport and the NSW Institute of Sport played a very entertaining game.

The game finished 0-0, but both sides created a number of chances and it was only the splendid goalkeeping of Angelo Konstantinou for the Academy and Matt Nash for the Institute that kept the score line goal-less. Konstantinou was called into action first saving well from Matt Engele in the third minute. In the thirtieth minute Academy's Daniel Aliffi found himself with a one-on-one with Nash and put the ball wide.

In the second half it was more of the same, with Nash making two excellent saves to deny the Academy's captain, Goran Veljanovski. In between Amied Shadmaan came to the Academy's rescue by clearing off the line from NSW's Brett Holman.

Shadmaan himself then had a good opportunity in the 35th minute but shot wide, and eight minutes later he centred for Aliffi to head towards goal, only for Nash to tip the ball over.

Either team could have won the contest and in the final minute of the game the Academy's Matt Anstey shot just wide to leave the final score 0-0.

Both coaches, Ray Junna (ACTAS) and Kelly Cross (NSWIS) were satisfied with their team's performance, as they played attractive and powerful football, despite not scoring any goals.

ACTAS: Angelo Konstantinou, Amied Shadmaan, Ian Waldon, Dom La Butte, Stephen Kemp, Matt Anstey, Rohan Coleman (Andrew Aliffi), Alvaro Guzman (Danny Agnello), Daniel Aliffi, Goran Veljanovski (capt), Paul Ivenic. Sub not used: Doug Hynson.

NSWIS: Matt Nash, Gavin Harte, Pat Carrera, Narbeh Aveness, Blake Oliver, Peter Gavaghan, Steve Baveas, Nick Stavroulakis, Matt Engele, Brett Holman, David Carney. Subs: Jacob Rek, Matt Biggins, Reece Iewin, Brodie Freeman, Liam Austin.

Best Players:

ACTAS: Kemp, Konstantinou, Veljanovski.

NSWIS: Nash, Oliver, Engele.

By Roy Hay

The Victorian Institute of Sport put seven goals past Fawkner Blues last Wednesday night in its final match before its Malaysian tour.

Fawkaer did get a consolation goal through Con Kaloudis, but mostly the VIS was firmly in control. Two cracking goals by thirteen year old Melbourne Knights junior Serkan Oksuz were the highlight, and VIS top scorer David Terek also scored a double to take his total for the season to twelve.

The other goals came in singles from Simon Storey, Daniel Rocco and an own goal. The win takes the VIS at least temporarily to the top of the league with Carlton having the bye this week.

Gippsland Falcons surprised the Melbourne Knights with a six-one win at Knights Stadium. Some of the Knights players had an intensive weekend in preparation for a forthcoming trip to Croatia and it showed as they struggled against an experienced Gippsland.

Peter Kakos took the individual honours with five goals, the first coming in little more than 30 seconds. He added four more in 36, 38, 71 and 85 minutes. Juan Nilo chipped in with a goal in 63 minutes to round off the Gippsland tally.

Anthony Pelikan, the league's top marksman scored his 18th goal in 17 games after 14 minutes, which seemed to have given his side parity before Kakos really cut loose.

South Melbourne had a comfortable four-one win over Preston Lions, though Lions coach Jim Gleeson admitted it could have been more.

Sebastian Petrovic scored two and fifteen year old Theo Petidis and Boris Ovcin one apiece, all in the first half, while Zoran Lukic replied for Preston.

The Blues created chances galore, but John Kennedy watched as they were spurned repeatedly.

Albury Wodonga recorded a fine one-all draw with Melbourne Knights Academy at Albury on Saturday.

The Warriors made a slow start and were caught after 10 minutes when Michael Vonja fired a shot across Sam Chambers for the opening goal for the Academy. It took the Warriors till the last minute of the first half to equalise after Jason Whitten found John Ritchie in space in the penalty box.

Albury had the better of the second half, hitting the woodwork on one occasion, with the rebound falling to a grateful Academy keeper. But the Academy defence kept its shape and held out for the draw.

South Dandenong beat Bulleen by three goals to nil in an excellent, even performance by the whole team according to coach Goran Runje. Mentor Memeti scored twice in 8 and 42 minutes and fourteen year old Zetton Korcarevski scored his third goal in three games in 64 minutes.

Korcarevski received a pass, dummyed his marker and put the ball away with the aplomb of a veteran. Filim Ibrahim set up Memeti's first with a move down the left, the second came from the other side. Bulleen were never in it, particularly after it had a player sent off, but the young South Dandenong strikers were caught off-side repeatedly and hence did not add to the score.

NORTHERN DIVISION NYL

	P	W	D	B	L	F	A Pts
PARRAMATTA POWER	26	20	4	2	2	79	11 64
Northern Spirit	26	17	4	2	5	75	32 55
Sydney Olympic	26	16	5	2	5	78	36 53
A.I.S.	27	15	3	1	9	81	38 48
Newcastle Breakers	23	15	1	1	7	47	26 44
Marconi Stallions	22	14	2	1	6	61	26 44
Q.A.S.	24	14	2	2	8	68	43 44
Wollongong Wolves	26	11	5	2	10	37	38 38
Sydney United	25	12	1	1	12	41	50 37
A.C.T.A.S.	24	9	7	2	8	39	43 34
Newcastle Colts	25	9	2	1	14	36	49 29
Olympic Academy	25	9	1	2	15	44	79 28
Marconi Stallions Colts	24	6	4	2	14	37	66 22
N.S.W.I.S.	23	5	6	2	12	34	38 21
Northern Spirit Colts	26	5	6	2	15	26	58 21
Sydney United Colts	23	3	3	2	16	25	64 12
Wollongong Colts	25	1	2	2	22	13	116 5

ROUND 28

Marconi Stallions	8	W'gong. Wolves Colts	0
Junior 27', 37', Trajanovski 31', Gulessan 35', Zoric 36', 42', Severino 65', og 78'			
A.C.T.A.S.	0	N.S.W.I.S.	0
Parramatta Power	1	N'castle Breakers Colts	0
Kukucka 58'			
Sydney United Colts	3	Sydney Olympic	10
Pellegrino 39', Akwas 42', Bastac 87'		Duric 8', 37', 44', 51', Macallister 42', 74', 89', Miot 53', Doumanis 59', Kyriazopoulos 67'	
W'gong Wolves Colts	1	Sydney United	0
Tzokakis 80'			
Northern Spirit	1	Marconi Stallions	■
Monie 72'		Junior 26', Sevenno 73'	
Northern Spirit Colts	1	A.I.S.	0
S.Cranney 14'			
Q.A.S.	■	Newcastle Breakers	5
Bell 15		Tomich 19', Juchniewicz 38', Angievski 72' pen, Rufo 78', Tancheski 88'	
Synd. Olympic Academy	1	Wollongong Wolves	3
Jaganjac 61'		O'Grady 25', Markovski 57', Blake 68'	

NORTHERN DIVISION

Russell Miner	Leading Scorers	
Q.A.S.	21	
Ryan Griffiths	15	
Daniel Severino	13	
Daniel Kukucka	12	
Franco Pansi		A.I.S. (Syd Olympic Academy) 12
Mark Tsioras	12	A.I.S. (V.I.S.)

Round 29 Fixtures

Tuesday 4 April	
N.S.W.I.S. v Sydney United Colts (Rd 27)	(Valentine Park - 7.00pm)
Wednesday 5 April 2000	
N'castle Colts v Marconi Stallion (Rd 23)	(Breakers Stadium - 6.30pm)
Friday 7 April 2000	
Marconi Stallions Colts v Q.A.S. (Rd 25)	(Marconi Stadium - 5.00pm)
Newcastle Breakers v Parramatta Power	(Breakers Stadium - 5.15pm)
Saturday 8 April 2000	
N.S.W.I.S. v Q.A.S. (Valentine Park - 4.00pm)	
Northern Spirit v Sydney Olympic Academy	(Christie Park - 4.30pm)
Sunday 9 April 2000	
Sydney United v Marconi Colts	(Sydney United Sports Centre - 1.30pm)
Marconi Stallions v Northern Spirit Colts	(Marconi Stadium - 4.00pm)
Newcastle Colts v Wollongong Colts	(Breakers Stadium - 4.00pm)
Sydney Olympic v A.C.T.A.S.	(Belmore Sports Ground - 4.00pm)
Wollongong Wolves v Sydney United Colts	(Brandon Park - 4.00pm)
Bye - A.I.S.	

SOUTHERN DIVISION NYL

Fawkner Blues 1	VIS 7
Kaloudis	Oksuz 2, Terek 2, Rocco, Storey, own goal
Preston Lions 1	South Melbourne 4
Lukic	Petrovic 2, Ovcin, Petidis
South Dandenong 3	Bulleen Inter 0
Memeti 2, Korcarevski	
Albury Wodonga 1	Melb Knights Academy 1
Ritchie	Von

COASTIES LEAD THE WAY IN PROMOTING SOCCER TO THE MASSES

Soccer in Australia, from national level down to state federation and even local amateur clubs, has consistently complained that it never receives any publicity.

One club in NSW, the Central Coast Coasties, who play in NSW Super League, have shown it can be done.

The Coasties have always had reasonable local publicity through the 'Central Coast Express Advocate' but three years ago appointed a new publicity officer and now arguably has the best publicity campaign of any soccer club, and most other sporting organisations in the country. Consider the following

TV ADVERTISING.

Under the agreement with Central Coast television station NBN3 (part of the national channel 9 group) the club has arranged twenty, thirty second tv ads Monday to Friday the week preceding each home game. Four ads are allocated each day of the week and are all in prime viewing time.

NBN3 broadcasts through Central Coast, Hunter, Newcastle and part of Northern NSW.

In addition a camera is present at each home match and match highlights are shown during the evening sports news the following day.

Cameras also attend some training sessions and interview players, coaches and other Coasties officials.

Match reports are also given for any away matches together with

general Coasties news.

RADIO

The local radio stations 2GO and SEAFM broadcast similar 30 second ads on the Friday and Saturday morning prior to each home match.

They also give match reports of both home and away matches also on Monday morning, following each match. A first team player is interviewed to discuss the previous Saturday's game.

General Coasties news is given throughout the week

PRINT MEDIA

The 'Central Coast Express Advocate' gives a complete report of the previous weekend's match each Wednesday also in its Friday edition a preview of the coming weekend's match is printed together with general club news.

A match report is submitted each week for publication in Australia's biggest national weekly, 'Inside Soccer', together with news articles of Coasties players and general club information.

Match reports are also submitted to the NSW Soccer Federation's 'Super Soccer' magazine for both home and away matches.

TELEVISION

Under a new agreement this year, Hoyts Theatre, Erina have agreed to have an advertising board erected in the main foyer of the cinema which contains photos of each first grade player, club news bulletins, match results, competition

tables, etc.

Hoyts are also negotiating with Val Morgan, who control advertising at all its cinemas, with the possibility of screening ads for all Coasties home matches.

Many of these deals are cross-promotional, not costing a cent for the club.

Radio station SEAFM sponsor the club's school holiday coaching clinics and Hoyts theatre hold special preview nights which the club can charge an admission fee price and keep all the takings!

The Coasties have always drawn large crowds to home matches and lead the way in Super League match attendances.

So far this season they have had only three home games to date, and despite two of them being played during persistent wet weather and affected by the Rugby league, the crowds exceed 500 spectators each night.

Last season the Coasties' average crowd exceeded 500.

Yes publicity officers, if you are prepared to get off your backsides, make yourself known, and in some cases pester the media groups daily, you can get publicity.

The Coasties have shown that it can be done, why can't you?

And what odds the Coasties will play a match this season at the brand new 25,000 seat, Grahame Park before not too long?

Keep an eye on 'Inside Soccer' for more news

ACT joins NSW Super League

For the first time since the mid 90's Canberra is to be represented in NSW's premier soccer competition. Canberra Deakin were the last team to appear in a NSW competition when they finished the 1994 NSW Super League in fifth place, writes Nick Guoth.

Belconnen and Deakin applied, with Belconnen winning out.

The club still has much work to do to prepare for their games this coming summer including finding a home ground suitable for Summer League matches whilst their new stadium at McKellar is being built.

The club has enjoyed its fair share of success over the past twenty years including the Club Championship for each of the last four years straight and the Premiership of the ACT League from 1996 to 1998.

Club President Tony Patterson said, "We're absolutely delighted to be accepted. This is a huge stepping stone for ACT Soccer and I hope everyone will get behind it."

The NSW Soccer Federation Board of Directors has agreed that the NSW Summer League will comprise the following clubs Belconnen (ACT), Blacktown City, Bonnyrigg White Eagles, Canterbury Marrickville Olympic, Central Coast Coasties, Leichhardt Tigers, Parramatta Eagles, Penrith Panthers, St George, Sutherland Sharks.

The Board arrived at the composition of the new league after considering submissions from 21 clubs.

The Board has also agreed that the performance of all clubs will be reviewed in the first season, with further consideration given to the status of clubs that were unsuccessful in gaining entry into the initial Summer League. This may increase the size of the Summer League to 12 clubs.

The Board is confident that the ten clubs selected thoroughly deserve their position in the new league. The task of making the final determination was a difficult one taking into account the standard of the applications," said the President of the NSW Soccer Federation, Peter Gray.

"The Board has given an opportunity to a number of clubs that missed out to have their position looked at again in twelve months time to see whether they have put themselves in a position to join the league in 2001-02" Mr Gray concluded.

The NSW Summer League will have a First Grade and Under 19 competition, and the draw will be developed around the dates of the National Soccer League.

Sharks no April Fools!

The April Fools Day match at Plum Park turned out a night full of misery for the Coasties, losing 2-1 at home to Sharks.

For the fourth time in five home matches this season, the rain came down badly affecting the Coasties' normal healthy crowd. The sudden withdrawal of captain Peter Preston, due to a nagging groin injury, on top of injuries to Paul Roberts and Shane Knight, reduced the attacking and goal scoring potency of the home team.

And Adam Peatey was sent off for a foul, which it must be said, looked no worse than other yellow cards.

Despite all of this, praise must be given to Sutherland whose coach John Lavin made four changes to the side thrashed 6-0 by Blacktown in their previous game.

They came at the Coasties for the first fifteen minutes and it was the Sharks that looked like title contenders rather than wooden spooners.

Kris Karanosis and Ali Saleh combined well on three occasions to put the Coasties defence under pressure but they weathered the early storm and gradually got back into the match.

After 24 minutes a high ball into the Sharks penalty area saw young Cal Roper, substituting for Paul Roberts, leap high above two defenders to head home a good goal. Three minutes later Karanosis had a speculative shot from 15 metres out, which Gary Meier appeared to have well covered, only for the ball to take a harsh deflection off a wall of Coasties defenders to leave the 'keeper stranded.

Coasties continued to put pressure on the Sharks but at half time it was still 1-1.

Almost immediately from the restart Con Paradisis forced Meier to make a great save from a low goal-bound shot.

For the next twenty minutes the Coasties camped in and around the Sutherland penalty area but numerous chances went begging.

Nathan Bym, Stuart Sontag and Peter Ritchie all went close, but not close enough.

Sutherland counter attacked and Meier miskicked a back pass and in attempting to rectify his mistake he earned a yellow card for a foul on Andrew Smith. From the resultant free-kick the ball was deflected for a corner which resulted in Phil Wurth putting the Sharks in the lead in the 63rd minute.

The Coasties continued to attack but to no avail and to make matters worse Peatey received a red card with five minutes of play remaining for a foul that appeared to be deserving of a yellow card at the most.

Nevertheless, the Sharks had rebounded from the previous week's debacle and had left the Coasties wondering 'what if' (they could score goals) and 'when' (will they win at home).

April Fools Day ended with one team the 'April Fool' - and it wasn't the Sharks!

CENTRAL COAST: Meier, Matthews, Steele, Daley (Drysdale), Peatey, Roper, Byn, Ritchie, Binskin (Anderson), Marshall, Sontag

SUTHERLAND SHARKS: Oila, Tedesco, Allison, Harrod, Stepehn, Paradisis, Corogo (Porter), Wurth (Magri), Smith, Karanosis, Salim.

SUPER SOCCER ON THE COAST!

PLUM PARK, LISAROW

SATURDAY 8 APRIL

CENTRAL COAST
COASTIES



F
FAIRFIELD
BULLS

COASTIES WIN IN THE FIRST ROUND AWAY FROM HOME -
BULLS ARE CHARGING UP THE TABLE AND BORG AND HOENSELAARS ARE SCORING PLENTY OF GOALS AGAIN

CAN THE COASTIES KEEP THEM OUT?

*FIRST GRADE K.O. 6PM. UNDER 21 K.O. 4PM. UNDER 18 K.O. 2PM

ADULTS \$10 - STUDENT/CONCESSION \$5

WE DON'T CHARGE FOR KIDS UNDER 16 YEARS

COASTIES SEASON TICKETS AVAILABLE AT GATE: \$30

Super League Summary

The Super League ladder has some familiar faces in pole position, with the always strong Blacktown and Bonnyrigg now in first and second spots on the ladder.

With a hard fought draw played out between last week's leading clubs Leichhardt Tigers and St George, Blacktown and Bonnyrigg were able to leapfrog these two sides and hold a clear position at the top of the pile.

Blacktown hold top spot courtesy of a 2-1 win over Fairfield Bulls at home, with a last gasp winner from Jason Bennett.

Despite the 4-1 scoreline, bottom-placed Penrith Panthers put on a gritty display against Bonnyrigg at the Serbian Centre. But with Bonnyrigg's passing game and hard running, they never looked in danger.

Bonnyrigg is certainly one of the

a fine header by Michael O'Shea, from a 74th minute corner, for a 0-1 victory for the Rams.

In what was supposed to be match of the round at St George Stadium the Saints came from a goal down to draw 1-1 with Leichhardt Tigers. A drab first half in which Leichhardt's Steve Karavatakos scored was followed by a second period in which St George showed more purpose and found a goal to draw level from Angelo Petratos.

The game disappointed local fans not only for the result, but also for the lacklustre affair it was St George, in particular, will need to improve before they meet Bonnyrigg next week.

Canterbury Marrickville found some form again at last at Henson Park delivering a strong 3-0 win over Bankstown for their fans, with new signing Robert Bustos scoring the first goal on his debut for the Berries.

The impressive midfielder who has just returned after a couple of seasons playing in Argentina and was formerly with Stanmore Hawks, also had another goal ruled out for

most attractive footballing sides in the Super League.

Sutherland overcame their 6-1 thrashing by Blacktown the week with a 2-1 win over Central Coast at Plum Park.

Central Coast appears to have fallen into a bit of slump after their early season good form and are yet to notch up a win at home - much to the frustration of players, fans and administrators alike.

Sutherland coach, John Lavin, included one 15 year old and two 16 year olds in his starting XI - a move which appears to have given the Sharks a fresh outlook.

On Sunday Macarthur Rams defeated Manly-Warringah at Cromer Park with

He looks a useful capture for Jim Patikas. Jim Nikas and Steve Christofondis scored the others to ease a few concerns after recent inconsistent form by the inner-suburbs side.

Eastern Suburbs lost 5-3 to Parramatta Eagles at Wentworth Park and while they battled hard all game, it was difficult to see them recovering from Adam Anderson's seven minute hat-trick at the end of the first half.

4-1 down at half time, Eastern Suburbs nonetheless managed to add another two to their tally, but Anderson also added another one.

NSW RESULTS

FEDERATION DIVISION ONE: FIRST GRADE: Dulwich Hill 2(R Todorovsk, 1m, L Dounis 69m), Fraser Park 1(D Rosenthal 80m) Hajduk Wanderers 2(Anderson 27 88m), Rockdale City Suns 0- Illawarra Lions 0, AC United 2(N Rivera 60m, N Marveilo 82m) Auburn United 1(C Elgin 38m), Stanmore Hawks 1(E Wong 56m) Ryde City Gunners 0, M S.C. Liverpool 1(B Watfa 80m) Hurstville City Minotaurs 3(N Knithakis 58'76m, S Klads 77m) Bathurst '75 0. **UNDER 21:** Dulwich Hill 3, Fraser Park 1, Hajduk Wanderers 5, Rockdale City Suns 0, Illawarra Lions 1, AC United 3, Auburn United 3, Stanmore Hawks 1, Ryde City Gunners 4, M S.C. Liverpool 1, Hurstville City Minotaurs 2, Bathurst '75 2. **UNDER 18:** Dulwich Hill 2, Fraser Park 0, Hajduk Wanderers 2, Rockdale City Suns 2, Illawarra Lions 0, AC United 8, Auburn United 1, Stanmore Hawks 6, Ryde City Gunners 1, M S.C. Liverpool 2, Hurstville City Minotaurs 0, Bathurst '75 1.

FEDERATION DIVISION TWO: FIRST GRADE: White City 3, Sydney University 3, Mt Pritchard 0, Greystanes 0, Greystanes 7, Belmore Hercules 2, Mt Druitt Town Rangers 3, Central Coast Lakers 0, Mt Pritchard 4, Sydney District 0, Hakoah 3, Hurstville ZSC 1, Hills United 3, White City 1. **UNDER 21:** White City 2, Sydney University 4, Mt Pritchard 2, Greystanes 1, University of NSW 2, Sydney University 3, Greystanes 4, Belmore Hercules 1, Mt Druitt Town Rangers 0, Central Coast Lakers 2, Mt Pritchard 11, Sydney District 0, Hakoah 2, Hurstville ZSC 3, Hills United 2, White City 1. **UNDER 18:** Mt Pritchard 1, Greystanes 0, University of NSW 0, Sydney University 2, Greystanes 0, Belmore Hercules 2, Mt Druitt Town Rangers 4, Central Coast Lakers 0, Mt Pritchard 3, Sydney District 1, Hakoah 2, Hurstville ZSC 1, Hills United 3, White City 0.

FEDERATION DIVISION THREE: FIRST GRADE: Balmain 2, Prospect United 1, The Wanderers Trasandinos Washed Out, Colo Colo 1, Holy Cross Ryde 2, Liverpool City 2, Western Sydney Lions 2, Parramatta City 2, Camden Tigers 2, Prairiewood United 3, Nepean District 0. **RESERVE GRADE:** Balmain 1, Prospect United 1, The Wanderers, Trasandinos Washed Out, Colo Colo 3, Holy Cross Ryde 3, Liverpool City 0, Western Sydney Lions 7, Parramatta City 1, Camden Tigers 2, Prairiewood United 0, Nepean District 5.

FEDERATION DIVISION FOUR: FIRST GRADE: Maroubra United 0, Eastern Creek Pioneers 3, Sporting SCC, Marckville Washed Out, Granville Greenisland 1, United Eagles 3, Hawkesbury City 1, Kellyville Kolts 0, Auburn Star 2, CSI Schofields 4, Sydney Crescent Star 3, Springwood 0. **RESERVE GRADE:** Maroubra United 2, Eastern Creek Pioneers 3, Sporting SCC, Marckville Washed Out, Granville Greenisland 1, United Eagles 5, Hawkesbury City 0, Kellyville Kolts 6, Auburn Star 2, CSI Schofields 3, Sydney Crescent Star 2, Springwood 0.

FEDERATION DIVISION FIVE: FIRST GRADE: Kosciusko 0, UTS 2, Bossy 2, Liverpool Olympic 1, Lithgow Workmen 17, Hinchinbrook Juniors 0, Birrong Sports 1, Western Sydney Passion 2, Petersham, Fairfield City Washed Out. **RESERVE GRADE:** Kosciusko 3, UTS 2, Bossy 4, Liverpool Olympic 1, Lithgow Workmen 11, Hinchinbrook Juniors 0, Birrong Sports 6, Western Sydney Passion 3, Petersham, Fairfield City Washed Out.

WOMENS SUPER LEAGUE: G/21: Manly Warringah Dolphins 3, Nepean Association 0, Macarthur Rams 1, Sutherland Sharks 5, Gladesville Ravens 0, Northern NSW/HAS 7, Marcom 7, Central Coast Lakers 0.

WOMENS STATE LEAGUE: FIRST GRADE: Hajduk Wanderers 5, St George Association 0, Roselands Raptors 3, Inter Lions 1, UTS 0, Gladesville Hornsby Koalas 3, CSI Schofields 0, Bathurst City 6, G/19: Hajduk Wanderers 4, St George Association 3, Roselands Raptors 6, Inter Lions 1, UTS 4, Gladesville Hornsby Koalas 2, CSI Schofields 0, Bathurst City 11.

SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE: G/13: Northern Spirit 5, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 2, Parramatta Eagles 6, Marconi Stallions 0, Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 1, Bankstown City 6, Fairfield Bulls 3, Manly Warringah Dolphins 1, Sutherland Sharks 4, Penrith Panthers 0, Wollongong Wolves 1, Leichhardt Tigers 2, Newcastle Breakers 1, Marconi Stallions 4, Central Coast Coasters 0, Sydney Olympic 1, Sydney United 2, Blacktown City Demons 4, Parramatta Eagles 4, Northern Spirit 1, St George 1, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 0, Canterbury Marrickville 0, Macarthur Rams 5, Leichhardt Tigers 0, Blacktown City 2, G/14: Northern Spirit 2, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 0, Parramatta Eagles 0, Marconi Stallions 3, Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 1, Bankstown City 6, Fairfield Bulls 0, Manly Warringah Dolphins 3, Sutherland Sharks 0, Penrith Panthers 2, Wollongong Wolves 1, Leichhardt Tigers 3, Newcastle Breakers 0, Marconi Stallions 1, Central Coast Coasters 0, Sydney Olympic 5, Sydney United 0, Blacktown City Demons 2, Parramatta Eagles 0, Northern Spirit 1, St George 1, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 3, Canterbury Marrickville 2, Macarthur Rams 3, Leichhardt Tigers 2, Blacktown City 0, G/15: Northern Spirit 4, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 1, Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 0, Bankstown City 0, Fairfield Bulls 1, Manly Warringah Dolphins 2, Sutherland Sharks 2, Penrith Panthers 0, Wollongong Wolves 1, Leichhardt Tigers 2, Newcastle Breakers 3, Marconi Stallions 0, Central Coast Coasters 0, Sydney Olympic 4, Sydney United 2, Blacktown City Demons 1, Parramatta Eagles 4, Northern Spirit 2, St George 1, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 3, Canterbury Marrickville 2, Macarthur Rams 3, Leichhardt Tigers 2, Blacktown City 0, G/16: Northern Spirit 0, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 0, Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 1, Bankstown City 4, Fairfield Bulls 2, Manly Warringah Dolphins 4, Sutherland Sharks 1, Penrith Panthers 0, Wollongong Wolves 2, Leichhardt Tigers 1, Newcastle Breakers 2, Marconi Stallions 1, Central Coast Coasters 1, Sydney Olympic 3, Sydney United 1, Blacktown City Demons 4, Parramatta Eagles 0, Northern Spirit 0, St George 0, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 1, Canterbury Marrickville 1, Macarthur Rams 2, Leichhardt Tigers 0, Blacktown City 2.

DIVISION ONE YOUTH LEAGUE: G/13: Southern Branch 12, Canterbury Association, Blacktown Association 2, Stanmore Hawks 1, Rockdale City Suns 3, Hajduk Wanderers 1, AC United 3, Mt Pritchard 1, Illawarra Lions 1, Nepean Association 0, Ryde City 1, Hills United 1, AC United 3, Stanmore Hawks 1, G/14: Southern Branch 3, Canterbury Association 0, Blacktown Association 3, Stanmore Hawks 0, Rockdale City Suns 1, Hajduk Wanderers 4, AC United 1, Mt Pritchard 2, Illawarra Lions 1, Nepean Association 0, Ryde City 1, Hills United 5, AC United 4, Stanmore Hawks 1, G/15: Southern Branch 2, Canterbury Association 2, Blacktown Association 2, Stanmore Hawks 3, Rockdale City Suns 2, Hajduk Wanderers 2, AC United 1, Mt Pritchard 2, Illawarra Lions 1, Nepean Association 0, Ryde City 2, Hills United 1, AC United 1, Stanmore Hawks Washed Out, G/16: Southern Branch 4, Canterbury Association 0, Blacktown Association 3, Stanmore Hawks 1, Rockdale City Suns 0, Hajduk Wanderers 1, AC United 2, Mt Pritchard 0, Illawarra Lions 0, Nepean Association 0, Ryde City 2, Hills United 1, AC United 1, Stanmore Hawks Washed Out.

DIVISION TWO YOUTH LEAGUE: G/13: Camden Tigers 3, Hawkesbury City 1, Granville Association 0, Central Coast Lakers 4, CSI Schofields 2, Parramatta City 0, Hurstville City Minotaurs 1, Mt Druitt Town Rangers 7, Ku-Ring-Gai Association 3, MSC Liverpool 2, G/14: Camden Tigers 2, Hawkesbury City 0, Granville Association 1, Central Coast Lakers 4, CSI Schofields 1, Parramatta City 2, Hurstville City Minotaurs 0, Mt Druitt Town Rangers 13, Ku-Ring-Gai Association 2, MSC Liverpool 1, G/15: Camden Tigers 3, Hawkesbury City 1, Granville Association 3, Central Coast Lakers 3, CSI Schofields 2, Parramatta City 0, Hurstville City Minotaurs 1, Mt Druitt Town Rangers 5, Ku-Ring-Gai Association 6, MSC Liverpool 0, G/16: Camden Tigers 1, Hawkesbury City 2, Granville Association 1, Central Coast Lakers 5, CSI Schofields 1, Parramatta City 5, Hurstville City Minotaurs 0, Mt Druitt Town Rangers 4, Ku-Ring-Gai Association 5, MSC Liverpool 0.

SUPER CADET LEAGUE: G/11: Central Coast Coasters 0, Sydney Olympic 1, Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 0, Bankstown City Cubs 2, Fairfield Bulls 0, Manly Warringah Dolphins 4, Sutherland Sharks 4, Penrith Panthers 0, Wollongong Wolves 0, Leichhardt Tigers 2, Blacktown City Demons 1, Sydney United 0, Parramatta Eagles 1, Northern Spirit 1, St George 3, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 0, Canterbury Marrickville 0, Macarthur Rams 1, G/12: Central Coast Coasters 2, Sydney Olympic 1, Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 0, Bankstown City Cubs 5, Fairfield Bulls 0, Manly Warringah Dolphins 5, Sutherland Sharks 3, Penrith Panthers 3, Wollongong Wolves 1, Leichhardt Tigers 0, Blacktown City Demons 5, Sydney United 0, Parramatta Eagles 1, Northern Spirit 1, St George 3, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 0, Canterbury Marrickville 2, Macarthur Rams 2.

CADET LEAGUE DIVISION ONE: G/11: Rockdale City Suns 1, Hills United 2, Hills United 0, AC United 0, Hawkesbury City 0, Central Coast Lakers 3, Hajduk Wanderers 0, CSI Schofields 2, Hurstville City Minotaurs 2, Stanmore Hawks 0, Ryde City Gunners 2, Illawarra Lions 1, Rockdale City Suns 3, M.S.C. Liverpool 0, Parramatta City 0, Mt Druitt Town Rangers 2, G/12: Rockdale City Suns 0, Hills United 1, Hills United 1, AC United 0, Hawkesbury City 1, Central Coast Lakers 6, Hajduk Wanderers 0, CSI Schofields 4, Hurstville City Minotaurs 1, Stanmore Hawks 1, Ryde City Gunners 0, Illawarra Lions 2, Rockdale City Suns 7, M.S.C. Liverpool 1, Parramatta City 4, Mt Druitt Town Rangers 0.

SUPER LEAGUE SOCCER THIS

SATURDAY AFTERNOON 8 APRIL AT

MELITA STADIUM
PARRAMATTA
EAGLES

BANKSTOWN CITY
LIONS

SEE SUPER LEAGUE'S POWERFUL EAGLES
TAKE ON THE HUNGRY LIONS

FIRST GRADE 6PM - UNDER 21 4PM - UNDER 18 2PM

ADULTS \$10 - STUDENT & PENSIONERS \$5
KIDS UNDER 16 \$2

Bustos sparks C'bury to easy win over Lions

CANTERBURY M'CKVILLE 3

Bustos 10, Nikas 45, Christoforidis 82.



BANKSTOWN CITY LIONS 0

Sunday afternoon at Henson Park, Sydney.

By Ben Cubby

Canterbury-Marrickville continued their improvement under recently appointed coach Jim Patikas with a solid 3-0 victory over Bankstown City Lions on Sunday afternoon.

New Berries signing Robert Bustos marked his return to Australian soccer with a goal and a generally impressive performance.

Bustos, who has spent a number of seasons playing professionally in Argentina, must have found it a bit of a culture shock to turn out in front of about two hundred spectators at Henson Park.

Canterbury demonstrated that the standard of play in the NSW Super League deserves more recognition than it receives, though, with a committed and clinical showing.

Bankstown enhanced their reputation for unpredictability in this match, following a recent string of good results with a rather drab and disjointed display.

After an even start, Bustos opened the scoring for the home side in the 10th minute. Adrian Molachino did well to get in a cross from the byline, and Bustos placed a low shot into the far corner of the goal from 18 yards out.

He had the ball in the net again a few minutes later, drilling a first-time volley into the top corner, but the effort was rather dubiously disallowed for offside.

Bankstown players Tony Joseski and Bryan Raeburn - whose brother Michael turns out for the Berries - created a few half-chances for the visitors, but the forwards seemed to have left their shooting boots at home.

Jim Nikas doubled the Berries lead on the stroke of half time, breaking a personal scoring drought that has endured for most of the season.

Excellent work down the flank by Aheleas Kotsopoulos resulted in a fine cross, and the unmarked striker drilled a low shot past Lions 'keeper Zlatko Joseski.

Bankstown lifted the tempo in the second half, but rarely managed to trouble Frank Mikuletic in the Canterbury goal.

Young striker Goce Trposki, formerly of the

Rockdale Suns, tried a number of long range efforts without success as the Berries sat back and absorbed the pressure.

Canterbury's Kotsopoulos was being given a lot of space wide on the left, and he used it to good effect.

His deep cross found Steve Christoforidis in the 70th minute, but the striker headed just wide when he really should have scored.

Shortly afterwards, Kotsopoulos cut inside and found himself in a one-on-one with the keeper. Joseski was off his goal line in a flash, though, and he did superbly well to turn the shot around the post.

Influential Bankstown substitute Michael Lemezina combined with Trposki in the 79th minute to cause a mix-up in the Berries penalty box, and Mikuletic was forced to defuse the danger with a scrambling reflex save.

Christoforidis put the game beyond the Lions reach in the 82nd minute.

With most of the Bankstown players pushed forward, hunting for a goal, Nikas broke quickly down the right and rounded the last defender.

He drew the keeper and then crossed to Christoforidis, who tapped the ball into an empty net.

Kotsopoulos should have made it four in the dying stages, but he couldn't find a finishing touch to do justice to the sparkling build-up play.

Best for the Berries were Nikas, Kotsopoulos, sweeper Scott Wells and Bustos, before he ran out of legs near the end.

For Bankstown, defender Richard Luksic produced a polished performance, while the form of youngsters Trposki, Lemezina and George Issa must be a source of satisfaction to team-building coach Ljube Jancev.

The Lions did much better in the two lower grades, with a 5-2 win in the Under-21's and a comprehensive 4-0 victory in the Under-18's.

CANTERBURY: Mikuletic, M. Raeburn, Molachino, Fedele (Theodoropoulos 52), Bustos (Vizzari 80), Wells, Christoforidis, Nikas, Markopoulos, Kotsopoulos, Joannou.

BANKSTOWN: Z. Joseski, T. Joseski, Luksic, Abi-Arrage, Grozdanovski (McDonald 26), Codmani, Issa (Lemezina 68), Trposki, Zane, Talevski, B. Raeburn (Trpevski 55).

Scorers: Bustos 10, Nikas 45, Christoforidis 82 (Canterbury).

Referee: Jonathan Streeter

Super League Tables

FIRST GRADE: P W D L F A Pts GD

BLACKTOWN CITY	12	8	1	3	38	11	25	27
BONNYRIGG WHITE EAGLES	12	8	0	4	34	24	24	10
Leichhardt Tigers	11	7	2	2	29	15	23	14
St George Saints	12	7	2	3	24	17	23	7
Parramatta Eagles	12	5	5	2	28	20	20	8
Bankstown City Lions	13	5	4	4	21	18	19	3
Central Coast Coasties	12	5	3	4	21	18	18	3
Canterbury Marrickville	13	6	0	7	22	31	18	-9
Eastern Suburbs	12	5	0	7	22	24	15	-2
Macarthur Rams	12	3	5	4	17	18	14	-1
Fairfield Bulls	12	3	3	6	19	22	12	-3
Sutherland Sharks	12	3	1	8	14	35	10	-21
Manly Warringah Dolphins	12	2	3	7	14	27	9	-13
Penrith Panthers	11	2	1	8	8	31	7	-23

UNDER 21: P W D L F A Pts GD

CENTRAL COAST	12	7	2	3	18	14	23	4
Parramatta Eagles	13	8	3	4	22	15	21	7
Penrith Panthers	11	7	1	3	26	19	22	7
Blacktown City Demons	12	7	3	2	28	17	24	9
Manly Warringah Dolphins	12	6	1	5	27	24	19	3
Leichhardt Tigers	11	6	1	4	23	16	19	7
Macarthur Rams	12	6	1	5	19	22	19	-3
St George Saints	12	4	4	4	22	19	16	3
Sutherland Sharks	13	4	4	5	19	25	16	-6
Fairfield Bulls	12	3	3	6	16	22	12	-6
Eastern Suburbs	12	3	5	4	18	21	14	-3
Canterbury Marrickville	13	3	2	8	20	31	11	-11
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	12	2	5	5	16	21	11	-5
Bankstown City Lions	13	2	3	8	25	32	9	-6

UNDER 18: P W D L F A Pts GD

FAIRFIELD BULLS	12	9	0	3	28	17	27	11
Parramatta Eagles	13	9	1	3	37	19	28	18
Blacktown City Demons	12	8	3	1	23	9	27	14
Leichhardt Tigers	11	7	2	2	28	17	23	11
Central Coast Coasties	12	6	2	4	29	18	20	11
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	12	5	2	5	16	18	17	-2
Macarthur Rams	12	5	4	3	18	16	19	2
Bankstown City Lions	13	5	3	5	24	26	18	-2
Penrith Panthers	11	4	4	3	18	11	16	7
Sutherland Sharks	13	3	4	6	17	19	13	-2
Eastern Suburbs	12	3	4	5	19	27	13	-8
St George Saints	12	2	3	7	15	38	9	-23
Manly Warringah Dolphins	12	2	0	10	12	20	6	-8
Canterbury Marrickville	13	0	2	11	10	39	2	-29

SUPER LEAGUE

ROUND FOURTEEN

Saturday 8 April

Blacktown City Demons v Eastern Suburbs - Gabbie Stadium

Game 6.00pm (1st grade) - 4.00pm (21s) - 2.00pm (18s)

Central Coast Coasties v Fairfield Bulls - Plum Park

Game 6.00pm (1st grade) - 4.00pm (21s) - 2.00pm (18s)

Bonnyrigg White Eagles v St George Saints - Serbian Centre

Game 7.00pm (1st grade) - 5.00pm (21s) - 3.00pm (18s)

Macarthur Rams v Penrith Panthers - Lynwood Park

Game 7.00pm (1st grade) - 5.00pm (21s) - 3.00pm (18s)

Parramatta Eagles v Bankstown City Lions - Melita Stadium

Game 6.00pm (1st grade) - 4.00pm (21s) - 2.00pm (18s)

Sunday 9 April

Canterbury M'kville v Manly W'gah Dolphins - Henson Park

Games 3.00pm (1st grade)-1.00pm (21s)-11.00pm (18s)

Leichhardt Tigers v Sutherland Sharks - Lambert Park

Games 5.00pm (1st grade)-3.00pm (21s)-1.00pm (18s)

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Charles Farrugia: The man behind VPL powerhouse Green Gully

Markian Jaworsky: Currently Green Gully are the Victorian champions, with eight wins/one draw from nine games in the new season, they have the best form of any club in the country, but with Melbourne's media coverage of sport, the Melbourne public has no chance of finding that out. That must be very frustrating?

Charles Farrugia: That is how it has always been

MJ: If this was not the case, and the media played an active role in covering news items, promoting the club and putting the club in the spotlight what specifically about this club would you want to draw attention to?

CF: Nothing more than what is happening. The results on the field just let the actions of the club speak for itself. We are not going to brag about it or ignore it, it's there.

We ask no more than coverage of the results, the team, and the Victorian Premier League

MJ: Now you are obviously keeping everything in perspective but at the same time delighted with the performance of the players and coaching staff?

CF: Definitely, definitely it is a great thing that is happening.

MJ: What role does the board have on this team and the results they achieve on the field?

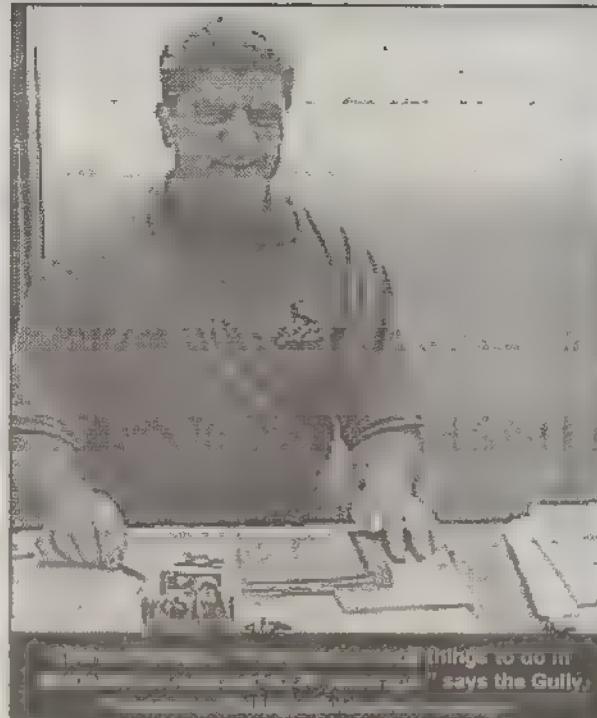
CF: The coaches get all the credit for the results. The administration can take credit for appointing the coach, that is the first part of how the club works.

What happens with how the team plays and trains who plays up to the coach. The third part is how much the board backs its coach. Getting the right transfers of players in and out, and keeping the players happy and team harmony. That is the only way to go

MJ: Approximately what are the current Social Club and Membership figures of Green Gully for this season?

CF: Strangely enough, we really haven't increased our numbers this season

MJ: Why?



CF: One, the apathy of the people in the community.

Two, I believe there are far too many avenues for people to go, as has just been proven with the AFL playing games on a Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday. It is killing soccer in Melbourne.

Three, there are so many things to do in Melbourne today as opposed to twenty years. It is no big deal having to wait one week for the next soccer match.

Four, soccer is everywhere, the TV is saturated with soccer. So the desire to go to soccer matches is no longer there.

MJ: Is the Social Club and Membership open to all of the community?

CF: Yes all of the community, everybody

Part two next week

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Altona East Phoenix

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1,400 see Preston draw with Gully

Preston Lions 1

Sterjovski 76

Green Gully Cavaliers 1

Kutlesovski 27

Sunday afternoon at Goodyear Stadium, Preston, Melbourne

PRESTON

Tsianakis, Ognenovski, Bolevski, Malina (Slavesci), Everett, Josifovski (Sterjovski), Dragrinski, Petkoski, Sapazovski (Dimoski), Panay, Kozic

GREEN GULLY

Bian, Atanasovski (Necesi), Douglas, Markovski, Mangos, Sevin, Sivigos, Vassallo

Velkovski (Papadopoulos), Kutlesovski, Bevincovski (Suric), Best Players:

3 - BRIAN (GREEN GULLY)

2 - Tsianakis (Preston)

1 - Sapazovski (Preston)

By Mark Fisher

Green Gully struggled to find their customary rhythm against a determined Preston Lions outfit at Goodyear Stadium on Sunday, and were extremely fortunate to have pulled off an away draw, thanks to some exceptional keeping from man of the match Robert Brian.

It was a day of terrific saves at either end, fine weather and a turnout of approximately 1,400 spectators who came anticipating a close game between these two former NSL combatants.

Gully started the most eager with Steve Douglas propelling his team forward with a deep ball to Henry Velkovski in the 9th minute. Douglas then surged forward to receive the ball back from Velkovski and fired a shot that narrowly went past the right post.

Gully did all the early pressing, with Preston largely pinned in its own half thanks to the preparedness of George Sivigos, who quickly switched play to each flank in order to exploit space. Preston responded by bringing as many men behind the ball as they could, serving to highlight the respect with which they bestowed on their yet unbeaten opponents this season.

Brandon Vassallo was next to try and test out the Lions' defence. He ran through the middle and then sidefooted to Bevincovski on his left.

Bevincovski timed his one-two perfectly, offering Vassallo space between Preston's defence and with a clear view on goal. He shot powerfully low but straight into a crouching George Tsianakis, who opted to wait on the direction of Vassallo's shot rather than pre-empt it.

The deadlock was broken in the 27th minute, when a George Sivigos free kick found Kutlesovski, who rose to head into the top left of the net past

Tsianakis.

Gully looked more likely to take the lead up until that moment, but then surprisingly played in a more defensive manner for the rest of the match, as if they were hoping their one-goal cushion would be enough to see their opponents off.

Preston were not about to lie down after conceding a goal at home and quickly managed to string some sustained counter-attacking moves together.

John Sapazovski was gifted with a great chance late in the half after he collected a well-weighted looping ball from Michael Bolevski in the centre. Sapazovski, near the left forward flank, outpaced defender Steve Mangos and ran unmarked towards the area.

Robert Brian reacted in an instant, rushing low at Sapazovski to virtually smother the ball away from the midfielder's boot before a shot could be effected.

Brian then pulled out a miracle save when, after being caught off his line, he desperately ran across the goalmouth to push a perilously close tap by Aleksandar Josifovski away from the goal line.

In the second half it was Preston who totally took the game up to their opponents. George Sivigos dropped further back from centre half, giving the Preston forwards more space in the middle.

Substitute Sasho Slavesci gave his marker a real workout as he carved up the right flank with some hard running.

Gully coach Ian Dobson made a double substitution in the 61st minute in order to try and arrest his side's sudden drop in possession.

Preston kept up the pressure nonetheless and received due reward in the 76th minute. Sapazovski was the instigator who turned and flicked the ball on the left side of the area to an unmarked player in Chris Sterjovski.

Sterjovski hammered the ball low and into the right side of the net past a well-beaten Robert Brian.

Gully fought hard to try and wrest the advantage back from the home side, but the clock beat them, not to mention the long outstretched arms of Tsianakis who looks to be a goalkeeper very much in the mould of one "Spider" Kalac.

It's a big call, but it looks as though Tsianakis will have a future in Australian soccer if he can replicate his heroics in goals for Preston throughout the remainder of the season.

This Sunday Gully are at home to Altona East Phoenix

Defensive frailties haunt Blues again

FAWKNER BLUES 1

Emmanuele 69

PORT MELBOURNE 2

Poutakidis 75, Tzirtis 83.

Sunday afternoon at C.B.Smith Reserve, Fawkner. Crowd: 500.



By Markian Jaworsky

It's the worst kept secret in the Victorian Premier League: Fawkner is very suspect defending crosses, and will concede goals from crosses in the last fifteen minutes.

It appears every club in the VPL is aware of this fact except one, Fawkner. Such is the frustration that *Inside Soccer* will spell it out.

Guys, spend an extra hour a week on the training field, with your forwards whipping in crosses and corners while your defenders mark opposition players, back and front post, and getting first to the ball.

Fawkner were just a shadow of the team that played against Green Gully last

week.

Hit by injuries and suspensions, the depth of the Fawkner squad has been stretched this season on more than one occasion.

Fawkner is quite the pauper of the Victorian Premier League, despite

enjoying one of the larger facilities for fans, this traditionally Italian club has not seen any development in the last ten years, and definitely not a candidate for the proposed NSL second division.

Nor does it even dream of such progress and success.

Despite the sombre mood, and relegation fight that lay ahead for Fawkner, there are some reasons to be positive. Goalkeeper Maurice Gonzalez, continues to shine as the best in the VPL. 17 minutes into the game against Port Melbourne, a delicious half volley fell for the hungry Damon Collina inside the 10 yard goalie box.

Collina had time and space to drill in his shot, saved miraculously just one

metre in mid-flight by Gonzalez.

Just three minutes later, Gonzalez fought an advancing pack of defenders and attackers alike, winning the ball and bruising a rib along the way. The man is made of heart, reflex and agility.

Half an hour into the game and it was all one direction. Nick Tsaltas crossed for Collina who tried an audacious backheel at goal, only to be tackled on the line.

But it was Fawkner who threatened late in the half against the run of play.

Frank Montana set up Sandy Emmanuele, who shot across the face of goal, and virtually on the stroke of halftime it was him again who came close with a quick-thinking overhead kick.

The second half started very slow, and picked up to full speed at the death. Fallen South Melbourne young star Mustafa Mustafa only just started to get into the game.

On the hour, his diagonal run from wide out on the halfway line, found space and time to power in a drive.

Fawkner's Frank Montana wasted a gifted chance from a clever Joe Biskic backheel and Port Melbourne's Damon Collina headed over from close range.

It was Fawkner who broke the deadlock. Shrifovski dribbled up to penalty area, lost the ball and in the resulting scramble, Emmanuele put the ball past Port Melbourne's Tony Lyras.

It was Sam Poutakidis (pictured) who first exposed the Fawkner weakness, heading an easy goal on 75 minutes.

With just seven minutes remaining, Mustafa Mustafa again went for a run and shot, forcing the brilliant Gonzalez to deflect for a corner.

Mustafa took the resulting corner and this time it was the substitute



Port Melbourne's Sam Poutakidis versus Fawkner

Pic by Markian Jaworsky

George Tzirtis who punished Fawkner for the second late header of the day.

It will be a long hard season for Fawkner if they cannot correct some fundamental defensive tactics.

FAWKNER BLUES: Gonzalez, Tramontana, Stojcevski, Desantis, Schipano, Vazzocchi, Biskic (Luci 71), Panebianos, Shrifovski, Emmanuele, Murphy.

PORT MELBOURNE: Lyras, Dalmanakas, Sonsini, Watson, Pappas, Mihavlovic (Tzirtis 71), Poutakidis, Mustafa, Knezevic, Tsaltas, Collina (Pir 85).

Yellows:
Fawkner: Biskic 33.
Port Melb: Collina 70, Pappas 90.

Man of the Match:
3. MAURICE GONZALEZ (BLUES)
2. Damon Collina (Port Melbourne)
1. Mustafa Mustafa (Port Melbourne)

Referee: Robert Josifovski

VPL RESULTS

FIRST GRADE

FAWKNER BLUES 1

Emmanuele.

PORT MELBOURNE SHARKS 2

Poutakidis, Palamaras

PRESTON LIONS 1

Sterjovski.

GREEN GULLY CAVALIERS 1

Kutlesovski.

ALTONA EAST PHOENIX 2

Dimitrellos, Groudis

OAKLEIGH CANNONS 2

Nalpantidis, Alagiosidis.

BENTLEIGH GREENS 0

ALTONA MAGIC 0

RESERVES:

Fawkner Blues 3 Port Melb Shark 2

Preston Lions 1 Green Gully Ca 1

Altona East Ph3 Oakleigh Can 1

Bentleigh Grns 4 Altona Magic 1

PLAYED MONDAY NIGHT:

Bulleen Zebras v St Albans Saints

Heidelberg Un v Melbourne Raiders

FIRST GRADE

GREEN GULLY CAVALIERS

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Bentleigh Greens	9	8	1	0	24	5	25
Altona Magic	9	5	2	2	16	9	17
St Albans Saints	9	3	4	2	11	12	13
Oakleigh Cannons	8	3	3	2	14	10	12
Altona East Phoenix	9	3	3	3	14	16	12
Port Melb. Sharks	9	3	3	3	8	10	12
Melbourne Raiders	9	3	2	4	15	17	11
Preston Lions	8	2	3	3	9	10	9
Bulleen Zebras	9	2	3	4	11	14	9
Fawkner Blues	8	2	2	4	11	15	8
Heidelberg United	8	2	0	6	11	19	6

RESERVES

BENTLEIGH GREENS

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Green Gully Cav	9	7	0	2	34	11	21
Port Melbourne Sharks	9	6	2	1	32	9	20
Altona East Phoenix	9	4	3	2	20	18	15
St Albans Saints	9	4	2	3	14	15	14
Preston Lions	8	3	4	1	18	15	13
Altona Magic	9	2	5	2	24	19	11
Fawkner Blues	9	3	2	4	19	26	11
Bulleen Zebras	9	3	1	5	19	26	10
Melbourne Raiders	8	2	2	4	21	20	8
Heidelberg United	8	1	3	4	16	29	6
Oakleigh Cannons	8	1	3	4	10	24	6
	9	1	3	5	7	23	6

VICTORIAN

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ROUND TEN

Friday 7 April

Oakleigh Cannons v Bentleigh Greens - Jack Edwards Reserve
8.15 First Grade/6.15(Reserves)

Saturday 8 April

Port Melbourne Sharks v Preston Lions - SS Anderson Reserve
8.15 First Grade/6.15(Reserves)

Altona Magic v Bulleen Zebras - Paisley Reserve

7.00 (First Grade)/5.00 (Reserves)

Sunday 9 April

St Albans Saints v Heidelberg United - Churchill Reserve
3.00(First Grade)/1.00(Reserves)

Green Gully Cavaliers v Altona East Phoenix - Green Gully Res.
7.00(First Grade)/5.00(Reserves)

Monday 10 April

Melbourne Raiders v Fawkner Blues - Epping Stadium
8.15(First Grade)/6.15Reserves)

Monaro off to a flying start in ACT

Nick Guoth reports that Monaro proved the much better of Tuggeranong United in their first round clash at Woden Park last Sunday.

They won 5-2, yet the game took a number of twists and was also highlighted by a first half hat-trick to John Rakic. As early as the 15th second Marc Conlon was presented with a chance following a cross from Robert Schroder but he sent his shot across goal.

Then with just 77 seconds gone, Monaro struck.

A ball from the left drifted past a number of players and into the path of Rakic at the far post. His shot was true giving his side the early lead.

Ten minutes on and Monaro keeper Ian Jeffries was called into action when Schroder provided Scott Conlon with an opportunity to level the scores deflecting the well hit drive for a corner.

Both sides had a few chances in an action packed next ten minutes, but at the 21 minute mark Shane Anderson took out Rakic in the penalty area. Rakic got up and slotted home to give his side a 2-0 lead.

Then another seven minutes and penalty number two. A long cross from Schroder found Jason Warren-Smith. Just after he lobbed the ball into the middle of the goal, Jeffries sent him sprawling. Scott Conlon reduced the deficit with a well taken spot kick.

The play continued from end to end until in the dying seconds of the half Lazar Simeonov took the ball down the left and to the goal line before cutting it back to Rakic. He beat a defender, steadied and finished well to notch his hat-trick.

Two minutes into the second half and Monaro should have been up 4-1. A free kick from the left by Daniel Macor was headed back towards the middle by Darryl North and then handled by John Osti. Rakic sent the penalty way over the bar.

Another six minutes and penalty number four and this time at the other end. A cross from the left into the box saw Scott Conlon sandwiched between two players. He then arose to take the kick, but it was well saved by Jeffries for a corner.

This was probably the turning point of the game as had Tuggeranong been able to pull the scoreline back to 2-3 they would always have been in with a chance.

Five minutes later they were to pay. Some delightful interplay first from Matt Julliene to Daniel Macor. He pushed the ball to Rakic who returned it to Julliene now on the penalty spot and the youngster picked his spot well to give his side a three goal advantage.

Following this the game turned very quiet with no real action for some thirty-odd minutes. Then in the last five minutes of the game, the life returned.

North ran into the box hurdling a defender along the way and from the goal line sent in a pin-point cross for the diving Daniel Macor to head home.

As time was running out a strong run from Warren-Smith was well rewarded as he waited past John Nelson and one-on-one with Jeffries beat him at the far post.

At Deakin Oval University of Canberra were still in the game midway through the second half when Nick Behr was sent off and then Canberra Deakin scored two goals.

Tony Lemezina scored the first immediately after the send off and then layed off the second for Vince Bodo.

Belconnen United overwhelmed Burns FC by the tune of 6-1 at O'Connor Oval.

Neil Barancewicz grabbed his first as early as the second minute and another later in the first half. Scott Manson, Craig Unwin, Jason

In Queanbeyan at Riverside Stadium Capital City Suns easily beat Weston Creek Royals by 4-0. Peter Hader who has come over from Weston, scored the only goal of the first

half with Paul Panbianco, Mil Sredojevic and Goran Josifovski scoring in the second half.

Despite being dominated for 70 minutes, Gungahlin Juventus dug their way out of a 2-1 hole to beat Canberra Olympic 4-1 in round 1 of the ACT Premier League at Jamison Oval on Sunday writes Nathan Long.

Olympic dominated the entire first half and half of the second through superb defence and mid-field ball control. Olympic's defence was so good that on the odd occasion Juventus gained control of the ball, they resorted to sending it deep, hoping Steve Lazzari or George Cattanach could outrun the defence to meet it.

It was in just such a manner that Juventus scored the game's first goal in the 2nd minute. Lazzari latched onto a long ball, and seeing that Olympic keeper David Collins was up, chipped the ball over his head into the goal from 20 metres out.

This was when Olympic's domination began, and the sustained pressure led to a goal in the 26th minute. Baz Giampaolo was forced to stop and turn with the ball on the right side of the goal, about five metres out. He flicked the ball back to Elliot Zwangobani, who then centred it to Elia Salloum at the top of the penalty area. He crossed the ball to the left to Simon Agnello, who hammered a shot past Tony Giannasca to tie the score.

In the 43rd minute, Alex Tsikis was given a yellow card for a heavy tackle from behind.

Olympic finally went ahead in the 63rd minute through Tsikis. He fired a shot at Giannasca, who misjudged his save. The ball bounced off him into the back of the net.

Eight minutes later, Juventus levelled the scores after a set piece from a corner. Martin Lazzari lofted a perfect kick into the six yard box, and it was met by John Whittington, who leapt high and speared the ball into the bottom

left corner of the net.

In the 76th minute Cattanach stole the ball from Steve Vanzetti and set off towards goal. After getting past the defence, he was brought down from behind by David Polywoda, with a penalty kick being awarded.

Steve Lazzari slotted the ball past Collins to give Juventus the lead.

By now, Olympic were drained and started to get frantic trying to get the equalizer. Juventus slowly began to assert themselves, and consolidated their lead in the 87th minute. John Glass picked up a loose ball at the top of the penalty area and crossed to the right side to Niall Stoddart. He shot past the keeper and the ball ricocheted in off the far post.

Juventus coach Ian Heywood was not happy with his side's performance, but was relieved to get the win.

"We played poorly today, but we got away with the win," he said.

Despite the nature of the loss, Olympic coach Baz Giampaolo thought he would take some positive things out of the game against what he called a "quality opposition."

"I honestly thought we had the better of them for the majority of the game, except for the last 15 or 20 minutes," he said.

Premier League 1st Grade: Canberra Deakin 2 UCU Pumas 0, Tuggeranong Utd 2 Monaro 5, Belconnen Utd 6 Burns FC 1, Capital City Suns 4 Weston Creek Royals 0, Gungahlin

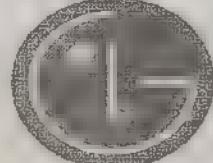
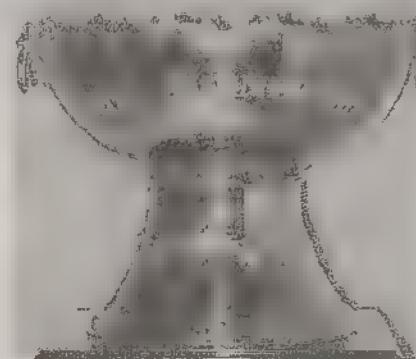
Premier League Under 23s: Canberra Deakin 0 UCU Pumas 4, Tuggeranong Utd 2 Monaro 1, Belconnen Utd 4 Burns FC 0, Capital City Suns 0 Weston Creek Royals 1, Gungahlin Juventus 1 Canberra Olympic 1.

Premier League Under 19s: Canberra Deakin 3 UCU Pumas 0, Tuggeranong Utd 11 Monaro 1, Belconnen Utd 3 Burns FC 0, Capital City Suns 3 Weston Creek Royals 8, Gungahlin Juventus 2 Canberra Olympic 0.

BILL TURNER CUP COMING SOON TO INSIDE SOCCER



Handbook & Draw



LG

LG BILL TURNER CUP 15 YEARS SOCCER

Floreat's WA triumph

Floreat Athena fired a warning shot across the bows of fellow W.A. State League sides on Saturday night when they thrashed cross-town rivals Inglewood United 6-nil in the Final of the pre-season competition, the Midland Brick Night Series.

The win avenged last season's Boral Cup Final in which United (then known as Inglewood Falcons) defeated Athena 1-0.

Nippy striker Vas Kalogeracos got proceedings under way for Athena when he scored after just seven minutes of play.

Things went from bad to worse for United as Peter Coci found himself on the end of another Athena attacking move in the 18th minute, his powerful effort deflecting off a defender before finding the back of the net to double the margin.

The match was killed off as a contest two minutes later when Coci again ventured into the penalty to make it 3-0.

With United now well and truly on the back foot, coach John Hunter made a couple of changes which he hoped would stabilise his side but the moves were of little effect.

Athena dominated their opponents to take control of the match and in the 33rd minute one-time Inglewood player Scott Daley bagged his side's fourth of the night.

The second half saw both sides make full use of their benches and it was Daley again that further extended the margin just seven minutes after the re-start.

Having played the first 45 minutes as sweeper, promising young midfielder Troy Bernard was switched to midfield at the break and he completed the route with a

68th minute strike.

Athena coach Michael Roki was over the moon with the way the side attacked from the outset to set-up such a one-sided final. "I think it just ended up being our night," he said.

"We've got a good bunch of players with a fair bit of ability, a good attitude and a great atmosphere at the club. The boys have got their reward."

Disappointed wouldn't describe the way United coach John Hunter felt after his side got off to the worst start imaginable.

"We started badly and it got worse. It was 15 minutes of madness and it cost us three goals. After that the game was finished. But we have no excuses because we were beaten by a much better team on the day."

Floreat Athena: John Xigas (Anthony Mori 85), Adrian Sutton, Boza Eracovic (George Tiniakos 71), Jason Smith, Troy Bernard, Doug Ithier (Peter Nikoloski 56), Andrew Aflos (Chris Georgakis 62), Scott Daley, Peter Coci, Robin Dyers (Costa Socratous 67), Vas Kalogeracos

Inglewood United: Corey Hugo (Oliver Taseski 60), Jamie Goodman, Steven MacDonald, Alex Cummings, Lee Crosby (Nicky Dyer 42), Paul Lincoln, Daniel Harrop, Ryan Newhill, Karl Atley (Ivica Markovic 30), Taki Nicholaidis (Grant Learmont 51), Robert Milevski (Gary Andrews 31)

In the pre-match Under-12's Final, the Saints Academy trounced Sorrento 4-0.

Brett Klucznik

Uni-Mount perfect record after two rounds

By Jeremy Ruane

After just two rounds of the Ansett National Club Championship, New Zealand soccer's new-look national league competition, just one club, University-Mt. Wellington, boasts the perfect two-from-two record.

Uni-Mount surprised many, not least the pick of most pundits, Waitakere City, in round one, downing the favoured West Auckland combination 3-2 at Bill McKinlay Park.

This week, Nelson Suburbs felt the full force of Clive Campbell's young team, who set about their task at Trafalgar Park with gusto straight from the off.

Their boisterous start left the home side reeling, as goals from Andy Brown, after seven minutes, and Stu Roberts, with a clever curling effort thirteen minutes later, set the visitors on course for a 3-0 victory, Michael Buhagiar wrapping up the points for Uni-Mount in just the 36th minute.

The Auckland club succeeded Napier City Rovers at the top of the table, 'The Blues' having been held to a 0-0 draw by Metro at Albion Turner Field, in a match which was largely uninspiring, to put it mildly.

Goalscoring chances were at a premium on a playing surface of disappointing quality, with the ball spending more time in the air than on the ground in the first forty-five minutes.

Consequently, the aerial duel between rugged Metro defender Stuart Mair and seasoned Napier campaigner Martin Akers was the most memorable highlight, the Auckland man shading the contest on points.

The second spell was noteworthy for a couple of openings engineered by the sprightly Paul Jackson, all three of which required saves by former All White custodian Grant Schofield.

The 'keeper was beaten on one occasion, however, but the upright denied Jimmy Cudd's deft header following a teasing Chris McIvor cross.

The other game in Auckland was decidedly more exciting, and produced another upset, as Waitakere City's penchant for starting slowly continued, Miramar Rangers recording a 3-2 victory at Fred Taylor Park.

The home team dominated proceedings throughout the first half, but Hamish Carmody's early opening goal was all they had to show for their efforts approaching the half-time whistle.

Fate then intervened, with Paul Stephens propelling a wayward back-pass into his own net to level matters, before former Barnsley professional Curtis Bernard ensured

Rangers went into the dressing rooms with their noses in front at the break.

Waitakere levelled matters on the hour, Carmody turning provider this time, Liam Mulrooney the beneficiary of his team-mate's promptings. But the visitors gradually grew in confidence, and three minutes from time, burly substitute Nasser Mohammed ensured his team-mates a happy Ansett flight back to Wellington by heading home the winner.

That win moves Miramar into fourth place on the table at this early stage, behind Manawatu on goal difference, after the provincial side scored a 3-0 victory over Christchurch City at Memorial Park.

Two Ian Robinson goals in the first nineteen minutes gave Richard Hudson's team the perfect start, and Jeremy Seales wrapped up the points fifteen minutes from time for Manawatu, who were very much unfancied in last season's North Island Soccer League, but took advantage of their relative anonymity to give many an opponent a fright, particularly in the early stages of the campaign.

Justin Flaws scored the only goal of the game at the New Caledonian Ground, as Dunedin Technical recorded a 1-0 victory over Central United at the competition's southern-most venue.



NEW ZEALAND NATIONAL CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP

ROUND TWO RESULTS

Dunedin Technical	1-0	Central United
J. Flaws (58)		
Manawatu	3-0	Christchurch City
I. Robinson (8, 19)		
J. Seales (75)		
Metro	0-0	Napier City Rovers
Nelson Suburbs	0-3	Uni. - Mt. Wellington
A. Brown (7)		
S. Roberts (20)		
M. Buhagiar (36)		
Waitakere City	2-3	Miramar Rangers
H. Carmody (12)		"Oggie" (42)
L. Mulrooney (59)		C. Bernard (44)
		N. Mohammed (87)

ROUND THREE FIXTURES (2PM, APRIL 9)

Central United v. Napier City Rovers

Kiwitea Street, Auckland

Christchurch City v. Waitakere City

Garrison Park, Christchurch

Manawatu v. Metro Memorial Park,

Palmerston North

Miramar Rangers v. Nelson Suburbs

Centennial Park, Wellington

Univ.-Mt. Wellington v. Dunedin

Technical Bill McKinlay Park, Auckland

* "Oggie" by the way is own goal, but you knew that didn't you!

Mum, I married a Stallion!

Nadia Renaud with Daniela Raco

So Nadia, where did you meet your husband, Marconi star Brendan Renaud? We met at Primary School - he was a year below me. We then went to different High Schools, and met up again at a youth group.

You are childhood sweethearts - was it love at first sight? No. He thought he was too cool.

Do you have an understanding of the game? I have a very basic understanding. I don't know the overall nitty gritty of the game.

Quick Quiz: What position does Brendan play? Attacking left wing back.

What is the offside rule? When the ball is between the goalkeeper and the last man of the other team, there cannot be a Marconi player before the ball leaves the foot of the opposition.

Who are the key players in the side? Dominic Longo, Brad Maloney, and of course Brendan.

What's so special about Brad Maloney? He is a hard worker, and never gives up.

Are you Brendan's harshest critic? We talk about it, because he knows he can get an honest opinion from me.

Brendan's no known for his bad-boy behaviour on the pitch. Do you caution him about any on-field biff? If he has a bit of tension, or when he is close to suspension - fourth yellow - that's when I might have a word with him.

Is he the first or last to leave the

change room after a game? The last - last, last, last, last.....

Rate Brendan's soccer skills out of ten: 9.5/10

Are you the typical 'glamour' wife of a soccer player? No short skirts - my mother would have a coronary.

Describe Brendan's dress sense? Is he the glamour queen? He is very good, and takes pride in what he wears.

What animal (or thing) best describes Brendan's personality? The 'Energiser Bunny', because he just keeps going.

Does Brendan have any hidden talents (that you can share with us)? He loves to dance, and be the centre of attention. He is a Leo and basks in the limelight.

Did he plan any romantic surprises on Valentine's Day? It was pretty tame.

Who or what would Brendan be if he was not a soccer player? In marketing - dealing with people and in the public eye.

High profile sports stars are leading the way in the art of tattooing. If Brendan were to sport some attractive ink-work would he live in fear of a potential cuff around the ear? I would be horrified.... I'd fall over.

What would Brendan's idea of a romantic night out be? Somewhere in the mountains. In a beautiful cabin with a log fire.

Who wears the apron in the house? 50/50. He probably does more than me, because he has more time on his hands...

'Mr Mom'.

What gourmet cuisines can Brendan whip up in the kitchen? Spaghetti Bolognese - my mum's recipe.

Is he a handy man around the home? Very much so. He is a carpenter by trade - pergolas, renovations, just name it.

Christian Care told me that of all the Marconi boys, Brendan is the most likely to be caught dancing on a podium at a night-club. Did you teach him all the right moves? I taught him very little. The rest he is responsible for.

Which member of the Marconi squad would top Cleo's most eligible bachelor list? Danny Invincible and Dominic Longo.

Does Brendan follow any pre-match rituals or superstitions? He has a special pre-match meal, usually rice and chicken. He has half an hour's sleep, and an hour to get ready for the game.

Describe Brendan's mood after a bad game? After a bad game he is relatively quiet until he opens up and then pours it out.

Are you his personal nursing aid after a hard game? Have you got the foot message down pat? He has an ice bath. He lets it thaw and sits in for fifteen minutes. This cools down the body and any niggling injuries.



Nadia Renaud with Marconi Stallions' Brendan Renaud.

Is there a downside of being a 'football widow'? You have to attend a lot of social functions on your own.

When he is away interstate with the squad, how do you spend your weekends? With my family and friends.

How do you react when fans yell abuse at your main man? I don't hear a huge amount, because he is a consistent player? On the odd occasion you bite your tongue, because everyone is entitled to their opinion.

Have you got a mean right hook? If I had to, I could.

'Jockey' keeps Breakers on track

NEWCASTLE BREAKERS 3

Milin 39, Buonavoglia 62, 87

CANBERRA COSMOS 2

Roberts 18, Purdue 23

Tuesday night at Breakers Stadium, Newcastle. Crowd 3,826.

Round 27
game
originally
scheduled for
Saturday 25/3

MATCH STATS:



NEWCASTLE BREAKERS: Catlin, Pryce, Roberts, McManus, Sprodd, Dodd (Owens 37), Wilson, Buonavoglia, Tomich (Smith 70), Wieczorek (Trpceski 62), Moore.



CANBERRA COSMOS: Barlow, Milin, Popovich, Purdue, Polak, Winnie, Hamilton, James (58 Watkins), Clark, Roberts, de Jesus

(Prenzski 77)

Yellows:
Breakers: Trpceski
Cosmos: Polak

Best Players:
3 PJ ROBERTS (COSMOS)
2 John Buonavoglia (Breakers)
1 Moore (Breakers)

Referee: Matthew Breeze

By Aidan Ormond

Thank God for John 'Jockey' Buonavoglia! That's what Breakers fans were saying Tuesday night last week after a largely unimpressive Newcastle kept their finals hopes on track with a 3-2 come-from-behind win at home over Canberra Cosmos.

The diminutive striker scored twice late to seal the win, making his total for the season 13 goals.

The game was originally the previous Saturday but heavy rain postponed the fixture. Although much of the rain had stopped, the Breakers Stadium - originally built on a swamp - was still quite soft underfoot by Tuesday.

It's a long way from the idyllic Newcastle to freezing cold Romania. Earlier this season young Joshua Maguire was told by Breakers he would struggle to get a regular game in the revitalised Lee Sterrey side. A local team had a Romanian coach who organised the trip for the ball-playing teenager to Steaua Bucharest, one of Europe's toughest sides. Aidan Ormond asked the young Aussie some questions, and three weeks later, the club returned them ...

Newcastle in summer is a beautiful place, Romania in winter can be bitterly cold and rainy. How has a young guy from Newy settled in to such a different environment?

Sure there is no place like home, and the winters in Europe are very cold but I got through the winter, somehow! It took time to settle, I think I just had to realise that I was going to be staying and with that I found the people to be friendly, and there is a real culture about Bucharest.

Describe your training at the club and how good is Romanian legend Lacatus?

Pre-season training consisted of 2-3

It was a tough result to take for the visiting Cosmos. Not only did they play extremely, particularly in the first half, but their preparation was severely hampered, with players staying in Canberra, Sydney, Central Coast and Newcastle after the cancellation.

To add to their woes, Socceroo Robbie Hooker and Danny Burt were missing, while for the home side Andy Harper was serving his suspension.

After a listless opening quarter of an hour, with players adjusting to the conditions, Cosmos' PJ Roberts slotted home in the 18th minute from the edge of the box after Catlin, under pressure from a de Jesus bicycle kick, punched a ball directly to him.

With players spread across the six-yard box, the Canberra midfielder calmly found his spot in the corner of the net.

Five minutes later and Newcastle was in crisis after a candidate for goal of the season from Nick Purdue. The former Spirit player picked up a ball about 25 yards out and his powerful shot sailed over the dive of the slightly caught off line Catlin, to give the visitors a 2-0 lead.

And, incredibly, it could have been three when the skilful Ivo de Jesus jinked past two defenders on 34 minutes and almost chipped the big Breakers keeper.

For the remainder of the half Breakers continued in a lethargic vein, although skipper Pryce had a good shot in the 36th minute saved by Grant Barlow in the Cosmos goal.

Thankfully for the home side one of their better players, the perceptive Glenn Moore, helped them back in the game. He

found himself on the left wing, where his low cross skidded on the wet surface across the six-yard box, appearing to take a touch off stand-in striker Luke Tomich, on its way into goal.

It was later given as an own goal to Cosmos defender David Milin.

And right on half-time Mark Wilson had an effort blocked on the Cosmos line as the home side finally perked up.

No doubt coach Sterrey would have roared his Breakers for a display that lacked the requisite fire and desire.

It was Breakers subs Vasko Trpceski and Greg Owens - two of their more skilful players - who led the charge in the second half.

Owens had a curling free-kick just wide on 58 minutes and two minutes later the same player just failed to capitalize on a Brad Wieczorek cross.

Then Trpceski came on after 62 minutes. His first touch was a corner that was beautifully headed home from five yards by Buonavoglia.

How the Cosmos defence could allow a player of Buonavoglia's height a free header in such a position was no doubt a point coach Tom Sermanni was eager to explore later!

At 2-2 Newcastle suddenly had the fire back, while Cosmos began to tire.

In the 73rd minute a superb move began with the hard-working Glenn Sprod crossing from the left for Breakers. He found Mark Wilson who headed back for birthday boy (30 years) Andy Roberts, whose shot sizzled but was tipped over by Barlow.

Two minutes later Cosmos had a good chance too but a crossed ball was missed by all concerned and the danger passed.

John Buonavoglia was finishing with a full head of steam. In the 85th minute he



PJ Roberts: superb display

jinked past a couple of fatigued defenders but no-one could get on the end of his cross from the right.

Then two minutes later Buonavoglia again found himself in the right channel courtesy of a through ball from the underrated Mark Wilson.

The striker calmly stroked the ball under the advancing Barlow as Breakers Stadium erupted at the 3-2 scoreline.

Yet there could have been a sting in the tail of this entertaining match. On full time PJ Roberts bobbed up on the right of the Breakers' box. His cross-cum-shot deceived Bob Catlin and hit the bar.

So, it wasn't to be for the plucky Cosmos as Breakers ended up 3-2 winners in front of a good crowd (for a Tuesday) of almost 4,000.

The result was vital for Newcastle's finals hopes after two reversals.

My man of the match however went to Cosmos' PJ Roberts. This player is a Manu Petit lookalike and playalike. He got through a mountain of work, tackled with genuine venom and scored one and should have had another.

His battle with the other Roberts, Andy, was titanic. The Cosmos player I think won the battle of the two ponytailed midfielders.

PJ Roberts would not look out of place in any top six side. And upfront de Jesus showed some nice touches in a side that is organized and committed.

For the Breakers how can you go past little John Buonavoglia, a striker everyone would like in their side. Even when his side was struggling in the first stanza, he was regularly making himself available, never shirking the challenges and always looking to take on his man.

Young Greg Owens and other sub Vasko Trpceski added a nice touch to their side, while the tireless Glenn Sprod was impressive down the left.

And at the back Breakers' Glenn Moore is a class act, pure and simple.

What is the standard like in the Romanian league? What are the stadiums like and how do the fans treat you?

The standard I know in Australia is unknown to many people but you must remember that Romania is number eight in the world, but my first match is etched in my mind when Steaua drew a 3/4 full stadium to watch the game against West Ham. They won the game and then drew the away leg in England to progress to the third round of the UEFA Cup. I had a good talk to Di Canio that night and he told what I would have to do to make it in Europe. The fans have been great shaking hands etc. and exchanging words and they are always willing to help with the equipment and the balls just to be near the team.

You went to Napoli recently. How was the trip?

It was a tournament for teams all over Europe. I made my first appearance there against CSKA Moscow (Russian champions) - we won but later lost on penalties to take third spot. Italy was great and it was all a great experience to train and play in yet another country.

You were known as a bit of a ball player. Has Romanian footy toughened

you up?

Yes the main part of my game is being constantly around the ball (play maker) and it tends to attract stiff tackles from opposing defenders. I've learnt to be smarter and learnt some of the tricks that I'll use when I need them, but overall it's just the speed and the less time you have, not only to make a decision but the right one, and that toughens you up and brings your football to a higher level.

What are your ambitions?

My ambitions are to play and be wise when I move from Romania because my dream has always been to play in the premier league of Italy, but it won't come in a flash. I've learnt it's not a sprint but a marathon. I miss my Aussie friends and family, and the beach, but I love my football more and that is what is going to hopefully take me all the way, before I return.

I believe a famous Aussie has rung you?

Craig Johnston rang me and one of the things he said was "remember where you came from and don't take any rubbish." I think about and do it every day.

NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE - ROUND TWENTY NINE

NORTHERN SPIRIT v MELBOURNE KNIGHTS

2	Robert Enes
3	Matthew Langdon
4	Matthew Bingley
5	Mark Rudan
6	Luke Casserley
7	Robbie Slater
8	Tony Perinch
9	David Seal
10	Nicola Bertl
11	Troy Cranney
12	Simon Catanzaro
13	Philip Moss
14	Shane Lyons
15	Anthony Farla
17	Paul Bilokapic
18	Paul Wearne
20	Jess Van Stratton
21	Michael Cunico
22	Paul Henderson
23	Adam Snyder
24	Elvis Olic
25	Ryan Griffiths
26	Jack Sobczyk
27	Adam Griffiths
28	Abbas Saad
29	Ian Crook
30	Sean Cranney
31	Michael Prentice



1	Joey Rayher
2	Ivan Jolic
3	Ante Kovacevic
4	Jason Vukadin
5	John Didulica
6	Mark Silic
7	Dragi Nastevski
8	Ivan Kelic
9	Paul Uriovic
10	Mijo Trupkovic
11	Murtala Toyin Abbas
12	Lance Phunkett
13	Paul Magdic
14	Ransford Banini
15	Alex Kriatzoglou
16	Roddy Vargas
17	Zlatko Maglic
18	Martin John
19	Zeljko Susa
20	Steven Tillinger
21	Michael Reda
22	Hrvoje Matkovic
23	Adrian Cervinski
24	Marko Prskalo
25	Lupce Acevski
30	



FOOTBALL KINGZ v MARCONI STALLIONS

1	Michael Utting
2	Che Bunce
3	Riki Van Steeden
4	Jon Lammers
5	Jonathon Perry
6	Marcus Stergiopoulos
7	Wynton Rufer
8	Chris Jackson
9	Fred de Jong
10	Jeff Campbell
11	Robbie Middleby
12	Harry Ngata
13	Levent Osman
14	Batum Suri
15	Ivan Vicelich
16	Lee Jones
17	Mark Elrick
18	Stuart Riddle
19	Leigh Kenyon
20	Jason Batty
21	David Moya
22	Aaron Silva
23	Simon Eaddy
24	Aaron Lines
32	Noah Hickey



1	Michael Turnbull
2	Chad Gibson
3	Mark Babic
4	Dominic Longo
5	Pan-Keum Kim
6	Christian Care
7	Daren McDonald
8	Zejko Babic
9	Brad Maloney
10	Mike Smith
11	Danny Invincible
12	Buddy Farah
13	Pierluigi di Gia
14	Alex Duric
15	Francis Awaritefe
16	Harry Karl
17	Brendan Renaud
18	David Acski
19	Paolo Marchesini
20	Kris Trajanovski
21	Vlado Zoric
22	Josala Junior Sauturaga
23	Daniel Severino
24	
25	
26	



Venue: North Sydney Oval - Friday 7 April 2000 7.30PM
 Head to Head: Played 3 Spirit wins: 3 Knights wins: 0 Draws 0
 Last Week: Spirit 3-2 away loss to Stallions.
 Knights 0-4 home loss to Wolves.

Venue: North Harbour Stadium - Friday 7 April 2000 7.30PM
 Head to Head: Played 1 Kingz wins: 1 Stallions wins: 0 Draws 0
 Last Week: Kingz 0-2 away win over Falcons.
 Stallions 3-2 home win over Spirit.

GIPPSLAND FALCONS v BRISBANE STRIKERS

1	Bojo Jevdjovic
2	Dean Fak
3	Manny Gotis
4	Mehmed Durakovic
5	Jeff Hopkins
6	Brian MacNichol
7	Andy Vargas
8	Clayton Bell
9	Robbie Puca
10	Sandy Robertson
11	John Hutchinson
12	Peter Kakos
13	Adrian Savage
14	Doug Marcina
15	Jonathon Buhugiar
16	Juan Nito
17	Michael Katz
18	Igor Mandic
20	Simon Mlotto
21	Ben Cassar



1	Clint Bolton
2	Glenn Gwynne
3	Shane Stefanutto
4	Andrew Davidson
5	Matthew Belli
6	Brad Dilton
7	Shane Smeltz
8	David Pilic
9	Paul Foster
10	Wayne Srhoj
11	Chay Hews
12	Peter Dwyer
13	Stuart McLaren
14	Jade North
15	Mark Battistin
16	Peter Grierson
17	Jeromy Harris
18	Nick Meredith
19	Wade Baldwin
20	Daniel Duke
21	Jon McKain



Venue: Mobil Park - Saturday 8 April 2000 7.00PM
 Head to Head: Played 17 Falcons wins: 7 Strikers wins: 6 Draws 4
 Last Week: Falcons 0-2 home loss to Kingz.
 Strikers 2-2 home draw with Breakers.

SYDNEY UNITED v CARLTON

1	John Crawley
2	Ray Younis
3	Mark Racker
4	Velimir Kupresak
5	Eddie Bosnar
6	Vince Savocca
7	Mirko Jurilj
8	Nahuel Arrarte
9	Mario Jermen
10	Ante Moric
11	Tom Pondejak
12	Tom Maric
13	Matthew Zec
14	Kain Rastall
15	Aytec Genc
16	Joe Moric
17	Nick Bosnacki
18	Steve Bozinovski
19	Greg Saric
20	Steve Tolios
21	Zvonko Uslejbrka
22	Colin Luff
23	Terry Palapanis
24	Andy Rakic
25	Ante Deak
30	Brett Hughes



1	Dean Anastasiadis
2	Dave McPherson
3	Craig Deans
4	Simon Colosimo
5	Sean Douglas
6	Andrew Marth
7	Stuart Slater
8	Mark Atkinson
9	Alex Moreira
10	Lubo Lapsansky
11	Archie Thompson
12	Mike Conroy
13	Steve Martin
14	John Markovski
15	Con Anthopoulos
16	David Terminello
17	Joe Tricarico
18	Andrew Packer
19	Angelo Motsopoulos
20	Colin Azzopardi
21	Joshua Kennedy
22	Daniel Vasilevski
23	Steve Horvat



WOLLONGONG WOLVES v ADELAIDE CITY FORCE

1	Les Pogliacomi
2	George Souris
3	Alvin Ceccoli
4	Robert Stanton
5	David Cervinski
6	Matt Horsley
7	Paul Reid
8	
9	
10	Stuart Young
11	Scott Chipperfield
12	Brian Hamilton
13	Harry James
14	Glen Kolpak
15	Ilija Prenoski
16	Robbie Hooker
17	Nikola Mrdja
18	Graff Howarth
19	Grant Barlow
20	Scott Conlon
21	Elliot Zwangobani
22	Andrew Clark
23	PJ Roberts
24	Ivo De Jesus
25	Gabriel Gonzalez
26	Angelo Konstantinou



1	Attilio Hornjik
2	Ivan Zelic
3	Alex Tobin
4	Carlo Talladira
5	Damian Mori
6	Carl Veart
7	Nick Sabljak
8	Aurelio Vidmar
9	
10	
11	
12	
13	
14	
15	

FRIDAY 7 APRIL 7.30

C7 SPORT CHANNEL 13

NEWCASTLE BREAKERS V PARRAMATTA POWER



BREAKERS
 1 Bob Catlin
 2 Shane Pryce
 3 Andrew Roberts
 4 Adam Sanderson
 5 Todd McManus
 6 Glenn Sprod (below)
 7 Travis Dodd
 8 Mark Wilson
 9 Chris Tancheski
 10 John Buonavoglia
 11 Luke Tomich
 12 Robert Angievski
 13 Brad Wlaczorek
 14 Greg Owens
 15 Joshua Ferguson
 16 Vasko Trpevski
 17 Paul Wheeler
 18 Andrew Harper
 19 Chad Mansley
 20 Bradley Swancott
 21 Peter Juchniewicz
 22 Glenn Moore
 23 Damien Smith
 30 Jason Kos

POWER
 1 Andrew Crews
 2 David Barrett
 3 Michael Santalab
 4 Steve Eagleton
 5 Richard Piesa
 6 Joe Vrkic
 7 Jacob Burns
 8 Walter Ardone
 9 Mile Sterjovski
 10 Joel Griffiths
 11 Steve Berry
 12 Stephen Laybutt
 13 Milan Blagojevic
 14 John Angelucci
 15 Danny Townsend
 16 Mark Byrnes
 17 Danny Kukucka
 18 Lachlan Campbell
 19 Matt Thompson
 20 Barney Smith
 21 Ahmid Elrich
 22 John Gibson
 23
 24
 25
 26
 27
 28 Peter Bennett
 29
 30 Mike Gibson



Venue: Breakers Stadium
Friday 7 April 7.30PM

Head-to-Head: 1
Breakers: 1
Power: 0
Draws: 0

Last Week: Breakers 2-2 away draw with Strikers
Power 1-0 home win over South Melbourne



SUNDAY 9 APRIL 6.00

C7 SPORT CHANNEL 12

SOUTH MELBOURNE V PERTH GLORY



SOUTH MELBOURNE

1 Milan Udvaracz
 2 Steve Iosifidis
 3 Fausto de Amicis
 4 Nick Orlic
 5 Con Blatsis
 6 David Clarkson
 7 Steve Panopoulos
 8 Vaughan Coveny
 9 Paul Trimboli
 10 Michael Curcija
 11 John Anastasiadis
 12 Richie Alaglich
 13 Adrian Cuzzupe
 14 Anthony Magnacca (below)
 15 Goran Lozanovski
 16
 17 Jim Tsekinis
 18 Robert Liparoti
 19 Tasos Psonis
 20 Chris Jones
 21 Rade Culbirk
 22 Mustafa Mustafa
 23 Chris Roche
 24 Andy Vlahos

GLORY

1 Tom Tomich
 2 Robert Trajkovski
 3 Jamie Harnwell
 4 Aurelio
 5 Vinko Buljubasic
 6 Gareth Naven
 7 Scott Miller
 8 Troy Halpin
 9 Alistair Edwards
 10 Bobby Despotoski
 11 Kasey Wehrman
 12 Peter Buljan
 13 James Afkos
 14 Dion Valle
 15 Edgar Junior
 16
 17 Hamilton Thorp
 18 John Carbone
 19 Tony Franken
 20 Ivan Ergic
 21 Ljubo Milicevic
 22 Jason Petkovic
 23 Aaron Cole
 24 Gary Farla
 25

Venue: Bob Jane Stadium
Sunday 9 April 6.00PM

Head to Head: 7
South: 2
Glory: 4
Draws: 1

Last Week: South 1-0 away loss to Power.
Glory 2-0 home win over Sydney United.



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Northern Spirit v Melbourne Knights Saturday night.

South Melbourne v Perth Glory Sunday night.

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